



An exploratory study of the employment prospects of Deaf individuals in Zimbabwe.

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the employment prospects for Deaf individuals in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe is known to have one of the highest numbers of educated people in Africa. However, this does not include the deaf people who are often informally employed because of the poor quality of education afforded to them. The research explored the employment prospects for Deaf individuals using a quality research design to understand their experiences in this context. Twenty participants were purposefully selected in two cities, namely Bulawayo and Gweru. They had completed their secondary level of education and sat for the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) ordinary level exams which are Zimbabwe's national exams, while others sat for Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO). The findings revealed limitations and inconsistencies in the education process, which restricted their progress for further studies as well as future employment prospects. These limitations include that Deaf learners are required to write exams that are separate from other hearing learners in terms of content. Educators do not take into consideration the Deaf learners' limited comprehension of the English language. There is a lack of knowledge of sign language by educators and limited exposure to training to get the knowledge. These factors affected their work prospects as they were more likely to end up working in the informal sector, where they also faced oppression and exclusion based on their unique mode of communication. They also experienced the latter when accessing public services like hospitals. The challenges they face leave them disempowered, excluded and incapable of personal and social development. The research offers knowledge on issues that need to be addressed in order to foster empowerment amongst the deaf individuals as social development is for the Deaf too.

Dedication

To my sisters Portia Maposa, Zanele Maposa, Tafadzwa Madzorera and to my brother in law Victor Nduku; may this be a step towards changing the social development of Deaf individuals. To the Deaf community, the future is brighter! Deaf people can do anything too!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

This chapter elaborates on the research topic, its main research questions, objectives and main assumptions. It explores the statement of the problem and how the information obtained from this research will inform policy, strategic frameworks and programs. Ethical consideration will be clarified.

1.1 Statement of the problem

According to the World Federation of the Deaf (2016) “there are approximately 72 million deaf people worldwide, with more than 80% living in developing countries and unemployment for deaf people is three times higher than world national averages”. The Deaf go to different specialised schools whose syllabi may exclude subjects like science subjects (biology, chemistry and physics), commercial subjects (accounts, economics and business studies) and arts (history and literature). Instead, they focus on vocational subjects such as carpentry, plumbing, agriculture, building, dressmaking and motor mechanics which they can only use for domestic or personal services which is considered ‘informal’ (Husmanns, 2003: 5). Once they complete these courses, they still cannot easily get informally or formally employed. In Zimbabwe, they often resort to being street vendors.

There was a gap in linking the quality of education offered to Deaf persons in secondary school and their employment prospects. Education prepares people for formal employment and gives them the opportunity to fight against poverty. Ward (2009: 240) in trying to define the material and discursive nature of social inclusion, gave an example of how poverty and unemployment for disabled people’s material poverty may be. As she states, “the origin of this economic exclusion may be the discursive construction of ability and disability and the incorporation of this construction into the social structures and cultural understandings of society” (Ward, 2009: 240). The Deaf succumb to material poverty as a result.

This study examined how Deaf adults in Zimbabwe are economically deprived due to their poor educational background that made them unprepared for the formal or informal labor market. The purpose of this study was to find out from the Deaf people the best solutions to empower them by interrogating the underlying problems that possibly render them socially and economically disadvantaged.

1.2 Rationale and significance of the study

In Zimbabwe, the education system is limited in meeting the needs of the Deaf. This research examined the educational experience and consequent employment opportunities of the Deaf. It allowed understanding of their requirements needed to be put in place in the education and employment systems for their benefit.

1.3 Research Topic

An exploratory study of the employment prospects of Deaf individuals in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Main Research Questions

- What jobs do Deaf people currently hold and does it sustain a basic standard of living?
- What informs the decisions of Deaf persons regarding the type of job opportunities that are available and where they should apply?
- How has the type of employment they are in affect them socially and economically?
- What role does being Deaf play in the choice of employment and how has it affected opportunities on the labor market?
- How do education and employment prospects affect the Deaf people's perceptions of self?

1.5 Research Objectives

- To explore the perceptions of Deaf people regarding the quality of jobs they have and how it affects their livelihoods
- To explore what informs their decisions when looking for jobs
- To examine if being Deaf affects their opportunities on the labor market.
- To explore the link between the Deaf people's education and employment opportunities
- To explore if education and employment inform their perception of self.

1.6 Main Assumptions

The researcher assumes that Deaf individuals are perceived to have low comprehension levels and are treated accordingly. Therefore, they are believed to be incapable of grasping the mainstream subjects in education and as a result they are not offered to them in high school. This renders them incompetent in the formal labor market. The education system in Zimbabwe was and is not tailored to meet the unique needs of the Deaf. This has created a disadvantage in the education and employment system because they are also assumed to be unable to carry out tasks that speech and hearing abled persons can. In addition, the research is of the view that since Deaf individuals are expected to be able to lip read, speech and hearing-abled persons do not make the effort to learn

sign language. Deaf individuals are forced to make an effort to communicate with the speech and hearing-abled.

1.7 Clarification of Terms

Disability according to World Health Organisation (2019) “Disabilities is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. An impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations”.

Deaf: “any individual who is diagnosed as having a moderate to profound hearing loss as deaf” (Goss, 2003: 2). There are different levels of deafness however the distinction is that, ‘a person with severe hearing loss can hear with the help of assistive listening devices, and a person with a profound hearing loss may not hear even with assistive listening devices’ (Goss, 2003). The research worked with participants who were either moderate to profound hearing lost but most of them were the latter.

Hearing Impairment- There are many levels of hearing impairment and the World Health Organisation (1991: 2) records five grades. These are, Grade 0 - No impairment, which means no or very slight hearing problems or able to hear whispers. Grade 1 - Slight impairment, referring to the ability to hear and repeat words spoken in a normal voice at a distance of one metre. Grade 2 refers to Moderate Impairment meaning an ability to hear and repeat words using raised voice at 1 metre. Grade 3 refers to severe impairment, which means an ability to hear some words when shouted into a better functioning ear. Grade 4 is Profound Impairment including Deafness meaning the person is unable to hear and understand even a shouted voice. In this study hearing impaired will refer mostly to grade 4 and grade 3 impaired persons.

Sign Language- is ‘the use of gestures by people to communicate’. Facial expressions also count toward the gesture, at the same time. A posture, on the other hand, is a static shape of the hand to indicate a sign” (Rajamohan et al., 2013: 336). The Deaf use their facial expressions to communicate. These facial expressions are usually accompanied by hand gestures. Both hands or one hand and their whole bodies can be used to communicate when moved in the required manner. Sign language is how the Deaf communicate.

The **labor market** refers to “companies that act like buyers on the one hand, but also as bidders with regard to payment, working conditions, and individuals act as sellers, rendering available to employers their knowledge, skills and experience gained” (Serana, 2016: 201).

Employment - “Persons in employment comprise all those of working age who are engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit payable in cash or in kind” (International Labour Organisation, n.d.). Being employed should not be about simply having a job but should be characterized by the job being decent. Decent work- “safe work in a healthy environment with guaranteed income and employment security, a concept very important for the improvement of conditions in the informal economy” (Institute of Environmental Studies, 2010: 19). Unemployment- “persons that altogether lack employment, but who are actively putting pressure on the labor market by seeking opportunities for employment and by being currently available to start working (International Labor Organisation, n.d.).

Formal and informal sector is defined as economic activity by “corporations, non-profit institutions, unincorporated enterprises owned by government or privately, producing goods or services for sale or barter which are not part of the informal sector” (Husmanns, 2003: 5). Formal employment is defined as employment from such a sector. The informal sector is defined as ‘an economic activity that is not regulated by the state’ (Husmanns, 2003: 4). Informal employment is employment within this sector.

Stigmatism- a process that sees a person as, “systematically excluded from particular sorts of social interactions because they possess a particular characteristic or are a member of a particular group” (Kurzban & Leary, 2001: 187). The education system may exclude the Deaf by not giving them the opportunity to learn all subjects setting them up to be excluded by the employment system.

Social inclusion- According to Silver (2015: 30), “may refer to a process encouraging social interaction between people with different socially relevant attributes or an impersonal institutional mechanism of opening up access to participation in all spheres of social life”. It can also be defined from a “Social justice ideology” point of view where it is “primary aim is to enable all human beings to participate fully in society with respect for their human dignity” (Gidley et al., 2010: 4). It can also be viewed from a “human potential ideology” where it ‘seeks to maximise the potential of each human being by employing models of possibility instead of models of deficiency’ (Gidley et al., 2010: 4). Social exclusion is defined by Fischer (2011) as a “structural processes that repel

or obstruct people or groups from certain sections of a society or economy are usually not directly intentional and they can be intentional or unintentional”. When an individual is not able to fully utilize their potential due to societal limitations they are deemed to be socially excluded. The limitations imposed by society affect their social development

1.8 Ethical Considerations

It is important to work within ethical guidelines in respect of research participants. (Babbie et al., 2001). The following ethical considerations were applied to this research:

Avoidance of harm- De Vos et al. (2005: 58) stated that “participants can be physically or emotionally harmed by the research”. Physical harm refers to hurting the body while emotional harm refers to hurting one’s feelings. In this research, however, there was no physical harm but a little emotional compromise as the research evoked different perceptions with emotional connotation within the participants. The interviews made the participants be aware of the extent of their deprivation and it made them sad. However, the researcher talked to them and let them vent out their frustrations and comforted them until the participants said they were feeling better. Some participants asked to discontinue the interview and their wishes were granted. Some participants finished their interviews but later requested for their interviews to not be used and their requests were granted.

Debriefing of participants- Due to the fact that the research could have evoked different emotions that might have been harmful, the researcher planned to have a workshop with the participants and co-participate in a debriefing process. A process that was going to give the participants the platform to talk about emotional harm and any other form of harm the research might have caused and how best to deal with the harm caused (De Vos et al., 2005: 67). This did not take place, so debriefing was done individually after each interview. The researcher would ask how the participant were feeling after sharing their personal experiences and a non-recorded conversation would follow. The conversation would end when participant would affirm for the second time that they were fine. With each participants the responses were different varying from a simple, ‘I am fine’ to most of them feeling proud to have shared their experiences. The twenty interviews that were used in the research, they felt like they had contributed to a good cause.

Informed consent- The participants were told accurate and complete information so that they were able to fully comprehend the investigation and consequently be able to make a voluntary,

thoroughly reasoned decision about their participation (De Vos et al., 2005: 59). Participants were made aware of the research objectives when they met with the researcher. The participants only signed the consent forms when they had understood and agreed to the research objectives. This was to ensure that their participation was ‘voluntary’ and not coerced.

Deception of participants - Deception was completely avoided by the researcher so as to ensure quality results. The aim and objectives of the research were explained to the participants to ensure that they were not deceived (De Vos et al., 2005: 60-61).

Consideration of privacy/anonymity/confidentiality- According to De Vos et al (2005: 61), “privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality indicates the handling of information in a confidential manner”. The researcher ensured that the participant’s privacy and confidentiality was respected as discussed and agreed on together with the participants. Interviews were conducted in private, their real names were not used. Although it was originally intended to video record the interviews, this was not done.

Actions and competence of researchers - “Researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation” (De Vos et al., 2005: 63). The interviews were conducted in sign language with the help of an interpreter. The researcher can communicate using sign language, but her knowledge was not at par with that of an interpreter who helped to clarify accuracy.

Cooperation with contributors – The researcher worked with stakeholders from King George V1 School in accessing participants who also referred the first interpreter. The researcher worked with interpreters whose duties were clearly stated out prior to commencing the interviews. The second interpreter was from within the researcher’s personal network as she is familiar with the community (De Vos et al 2005: 65).

Publication of the findings - The researcher worked towards documenting her research in a comprehensive dissertation that would ideally be eloquently written and easy to comprehend. This was in accordance to De Vos et al (2005: 65) statement, “the information must be formulated and conveyed clearly and unambiguously to avoid or minimise misappropriation by subjects, the general public and even colleagues”. After completion, the dissertation is to be submitted to the UCT library where it will be available for academic and public use and a reference for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature that justified the need for this research. It looks with a special focus on the employment situation in Zimbabwe and then narrows down to the issues surrounding employment for the Deaf. The chapter also includes the research's main themes, theoretical framework and policy and legislation.

2.2 Review of literature

2. 2.1 Deaf people's employment challenges

Smith & Lambert (2016), wrote about how parents observed that there were limited or unavailable services for deaf and hard of hearing students. The study sought to find how to make use of available resources to help Deaf and hard of hearing people transition from school to a work environment. The study concluded on five major strategies which were; 'to be fully aware of each team member's duty in the transition process and to empower students to take ownership of their goals. The 'team members' refers to those that facilitated the transition process. To engage relevant stakeholders at local, regional, and state levels who provide services to individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, to provide professional resources. To encourage students to stand up for themselves and communicate with their support network throughout the transition process. To establish and maintain productive relations amongst all stakeholders involved' (Smith & Lambert, 2016). The study was both empowering for the Deaf and the hearing people which was a way of building a bridge between them.

In a study by Pagano et al. (2011) entitled "Sustaining a Laboratory Science Technology Program for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students" a technology programme for deaf students was assessed. The goal of the Laboratory Science Technology program at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology in New York, was "to produce graduates with strong foundations in applied science, hands-on laboratory applications, and "soft skills" necessary for competitive employment as laboratory technicians" (Pagano et al., 2011: 11). The majority of the students were deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The paper concluded that despite being deaf and hard of hearing, the students were treated the same way the hearing students were. Overall, this study showed that teaching science subjects to the hearing-impaired students is attainable. Therefore, countries like Zimbabwe could learn from such initiatives and empower their own Deaf citizens.

Fusick (2008) examined the ‘risk factors and characteristics of clients with hearing loss, including inequitable access to education and mental health care services, financial barriers, communication problems, and societal discrimination’. With relation to this research Fusick (2008: 103) says “employees with hearing loss may not know how to locate resources or may be ashamed to ask for assistance. Adults with progressive hearing loss and occupational hearing loss were also at increased risk for occupational and social failure because school resources and educational interventions are often unavailable to them”. The fact that school resources and educational interventions were often unavailable is the same for those born with hearing impairment. There is need for change which is a theme of this dissertation.

Another study investigated in the United States on “what policies might successfully increase work for 11.3 million working-age adults with disabilities by comparing the situation of those 37 percent of adults with disabilities who were working to those who were not” (Loprest & Maag, 2001). In 2001, there were 11.3 million adults who were at the working age but only 37% of them were working. A research was conducted to try to find the problem and the solution to the high rate of unemployment. This was after the statistics showed that unemployment was higher amongst the disabled than the non-disabled. The research identified three barriers, “job search difficulties, the need for specific work accommodations; and access to and use of transportation systems” (Loprest & Maag, 2001). The research by Loprest and Maag however refers to the umbrella term of disability and does not specify the numbers for the Deaf. The findings were that “other barriers to employment may be more important than the ones cited by participants” (Loprest & Maag, 2001). The study by Loprest and Maag used the term ‘disability’ as the umbrella term. It was defined as, ‘adults aged between 18 and 64 with some level of difficulty in performing at least one of a specific set of activities or unable to perform at least one of a set of functions’ (Loprest & Maag, 2001). This definition is useful because it included those individuals whose condition or impairment had manifested itself as a limitation in one of a wide range of daily activities that likely impact employment (Loprest & Maag, 2001). Therefore, there were no specific statistics in regard to the Deaf people however the theme of the paper applied to them. This study indicates a need for more policies that fight for the Deaf person’s right to decent work.

Lambwe (2017) carried out a research about “establishing whether career guidance service was available to learners with hearing impairment; assess the type of career guidance services available

for learners with hearing impairment; determine how beneficial the current career guidance services were to learners with hearing impairment; explore challenges faced by guidance teachers in the provision of career guidance services to learners with hearing impairment in special schools”. The study found out that learners with hearing impairment did have access to career guidance services but the counsellors had many limitations. These included, “communication difficulties, limited availability of materials such as teaching and learning aids, limited time allocation for career guidance, lack of trained guidance and counselling teachers in schools, lack of office accommodation; limited resources; lack of co-operation or support from other teachers and school administrators and indeed work overloads among guidance teachers in selected special schools” (Lambwe, 2017). The research however only focused on the vocational skills which would result in an informal form of employment. This was a major limitation of their capabilities and it is something that this research examined to assess a move towards means of formal employment for Deaf persons.

In Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Labor and social services, et al., came up with the Zimbabwe National Employment Policy Framework (ZiNEPF) (2009: 36). ZiNEPF acknowledged that there was a need to ‘promote the integration of the marginalised - including people living with disabilities - by meeting their needs’ amongst other means. However, this group’s needs were still not being met because they were still being examined in the same way as a hearing student is which can be said to be disregarding their uniqueness. It is within their uniqueness that their needs should be met by moving towards exams being done using sign language.

The employment challenges that the Deaf face cause disempowerment. There is need to empower them and according to Longwe (1995) there are five levels to empowerment. These are,

- The welfare ‘degree’ meaning basic needs are met.
- The access ‘degree’ where there is assurance to equal access to education, land and credit.
- The conscientisation and awareness-raising ‘degree’ where structural and institutional discrimination is addressed.
- The participation and mobilisation ‘degree’ meaning enabling of the equal decision-making process.

- The control ‘degree’ where individuals can make decisions, and these are fully recognised.

These stages are crucial in identifying which level the participants are at. They give a better understanding of the phenomenon and shows how much more needs to be done to reach the level of participation and mobilization.

2.2.2 Employment in Zimbabwe

A study by Luebker (2008) on the quality of employment in Zimbabwe was done using the 2004 Labor Force Survey which used two complementary concepts of informality to measure quality of employment. These concepts are; (i) the enterprise-based concept of informality and (ii) the jobs-based concept of informality. The paper concluded that most Zimbabweans, despite having an education and skills, end up settling for informal jobs as they cannot afford to stay unemployed because they need the income. It also concluded that informal employment “made a substantial contribution to overall employment and accounted for just over 80 per cent of all jobs in 2004” (Luebker, 2008).

The Institute of Environmental Studies, (2010: 11) concurs, “a majority of workers left formal employment around this time to try and make a living in the non-formal economy”. The period being referred to by IES is in the year 2008 when the Zimbabwean currency was devalued in the same year Luebker carried out his study. The point to note here is that these papers used all rounded terms thus, ‘Zimbabweans’ and ‘workers. There were no specifics about the differently abled in any form and more specific, the Deaf. Also, the fact that they were skilled for formal employment but could not get formal employment placed them in a better position than the Deaf people who were not even trained for formal employment.

Research by the Labor and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (2016) analysed the economic recovery and transformation in various sectors to tackle issues of employment creation at a macro level. The research found out that despite the introduction of the American dollar as the currency in Zimbabwe, there was no elaborate employment creation, therefore, no elaborate growth. They based their study on the sustainable development goal (SDG) number eight which “promotes inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all” (UNDP, 2015). The paper failed to mention disability in any form. Therefore, there is no inclusion without talking about growth, employment and decent work for the differently abled and, with regards to this paper, the Deaf. The paper did not make geographical and gender

clarification, there was a need to include the differently abled as a whole as well. Unless if they fit in the ‘other’ group which still spoke to exclusion of the differently abled.

Informal employment is on the rise in Zimbabwe. Informalisation is defined by the Labor and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (2016) as having two different concepts which are; the first approach which looks at where one works while the second approach looks at the type of job they do. Since informalisation is on the rise in Zimbabwe, it can be argued that at least the Deaf people had skills to work in the informal sector as per the second approach. However, the argument is that they need to be given the opportunity to be skilled for the formal sector too and not be limited to just the informal forms of employment.

Matus et al (2014: 1) conducted a study on ‘youth employment and entrepreneurship programing which was assessed through overall economic trends and patterns, resulting in demand for skills and workers, and the supply of workers and skills’. Also, under study was “Zimbabwe’s supply of the youth workforce aged 15-34 by examining Zimbabwe’s formal education system as of 2013, as well as the stock of the youth workforce, aged 15 to 34, by the level of educational attainment”. With regards to the youth workforce, it was concluded that it has “high levels of foundational and technical skills” (Matus et al., 2014: 4). Foundational skills are; “basic skills - capacities that facilitate learning, knowledge – organised principles and facts, cross-functional skills – facilitate performance across activities and education – educational experience required”. Technical skills are; “occupational - work activities within a job family, tasks – specific actions, tools and technology – machines, equipment and tools” (Matus et al., 2014: 4). There still was no specific reference to the differently abled who also are able to acquire the foundational and technical skills. Therefore, they should be taught to them in a manner they can comprehend and be examined accordingly.

2.2.3 Unemployment in Zimbabwe

Labor and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe, (2016) in the same study mentioned above, elaborated on the unemployment rate between the rural and urban areas and between genders. In 2016, “the broad unemployment rate was 5.6 percent and 29.5 percent for rural and urban areas, respectively, indicating that unemployment is an urban phenomenon and the unemployment rates for males and females in 2014 were 7.3 percent and 14.9 percent respectively” (Labor and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe, 2016: 11). Indeed this gave

a holistic picture of unemployment in Zimbabwe but that also meant the group of people being discussed in this research was neither there nor here. It can be said that it was being overlooked and or completely ignored. With the unemployment crisis in Zimbabwe - where it is measured by geography and or gender, this research can be said to be inconclusive. However, if the country is going to move towards reaching Sustainable Development Goal 8, then this phenomenon was worth studying.

One of the main reasons for high unemployment in Zimbabwe according to Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe, (2016: 26) was “mismatch between demand and supply” meaning what students are learning does not prepare them for employability. The Zimbabwean ministry of labor and social services’ ZiNEPF, (2009) stated that the ‘present secondary education curriculum failed to effectively equip children as per their unique requirements, therefore it failed to prepare them for employability and economic contribution’. This is true for the Deaf people, there was a gap in developing ways that will best work for them so as to equip them as well for formal employability.

The research by the Institute of Environmental Studies, (2010) is crucial in this study because it was conducted in 2008, a period which was very similar to the situation in Zimbabwe currently in 2019. IES looked at the structure of employment in Zimbabwe and labor markets dynamics from independence in 1980 to 2008. The major theme noted was how unemployment never improved; instead there was high emigration of the working age. Underemployment of the educated was also noted. Under-employment was defined as the “proportion of employees working part-time, that is, those working for hours less than a given limit, usually less than 20 hours per week” (Institute of Environmental Studies, 2010). Zimbabwe has been battling unemployment since its independence and the Deaf people are also included. Any move towards alleviating unemployment should also include them as they also suffer from the consequences of not having an income like poverty as discussed in the paper by IES.

Mpofu & Chimenga’s (2016) study explored the challenges youth face in getting employed and the social and political implications of this. The study indicated that the youth could have been involved in social unrest and violence. The important theme to note in this research was the unavailability of both formal and informal employment for the youth. Causes of this also included the mismatch mentioned above and lack of employment creation in numerous sectors. This study

by Mpfu and Chimenga also lacked the specific mention of the differently abled. There is a need to move away from looking at social and economic development issues from a holistic phenomenon but towards a more specific oriented phenomenon. This could enable effective measures to be taken to tackle the lack of social and economic development issues at the root cause. This would be a great move towards social inclusion. Unfortunately for the Deaf people, they are a small group to cause any civil uproar seeing that violence is what African leaders respond to, to effect positive change.

Many Zimbabweans including the Deaf people are struggling to be employed due to the failing economy. The researches above show the struggles that Zimbabweans have been facing with regards to employment. Although there are no exact numbers that focused mainly on the employment experiences of the deaf people, they are included under the term 'youth' and Zimbabweans.

2.2.4 Education challenges for the differently abled in Zimbabwe

Chireshe (2013) conducted a study on perceived gains of inclusive education, the challenges faced in its implementation and how the challenges could be addressed in Zimbabwe. Stigmatisation and discrimination of children with disabilities were prevalent themes prior to the study. However, it was concluded that stigmatisation and discrimination were reduced as a result of the implementation of inclusive education. Other challenges from the study were "lack of specific policy on inclusive education; scarcity of resources such as special needs education trained teachers and assistive devices; the existence of negative attitudes among some stakeholders and lack of understanding of the meaning of inclusive education" (Chireshe, 2013: 223). This study therefore, sought to obtain data that can also help Zimbabwe towards policy formation on inclusive education by having trained teachers.

A study by Ncube & Hlatywayo (2014) 'explored the issues, realities and challenges regarding the provision of special needs education in Zimbabwe'. The results of the study showed that, 'the curriculum for learners with disabilities, although satisfactory, lacked components that ensure the smooth transition of learners with disabilities into adulthood and employment and the challenges faced in the recruitment of specialist teachers; shortage of trained teachers; refusal by trained teachers to teach special classes; centralized recruitment system; and poor incentives' (Ncube & Hlatywayo, 2014: 72). Ncube and Hlatywayo's study did not cover all the provinces but their main

findings did appeal to Zimbabwe as a whole. This paper explored the gap in ‘transition from school to employment’ in a bid to further inform policy formation in Zimbabwe for the sole benefit of the Deaf.

In another research for the provision of special needs education in Zimbabwean primary schools by Ncube et al (2015), the lack of qualified teachers was noted. A similar finding was also observed by Hlatywayo & Muranda (2014) in their research which was about evaluating inclusive education’s pilot programs. The idea of inclusive education might have been new but disability has always been there and it was appalling to find out that there were not many qualified teachers in the new millennium.

Mutepfa et al (2007: 1) investigated the “aspects of curriculum and classroom practices, the role of families, teacher preparation, and government policies that influence qualities of inclusive education, as practiced in Zimbabwe”. One point to note was the lack of legislative policy on inclusive education in Zimbabwe. It was noted that ‘students in Zimbabwe have the same curriculum despite abilities to grasp the curriculum’ (Mutepfa, et al., 2007: 2). This is what this paper interrogated by examining if this ‘same curriculum despite ability’ aspect could be the reason for that gap between the Deaf people’s education and employment.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

2.3.1 Human Development

Human development is a social development theory. According to Welzell et al. (2003: 345) human development has three components, “socioeconomic development, emancipative cultural change and Democracy. Socioeconomic development refers to, ‘giving people greater autonomy over their resources enlarging these resources: rising incomes, skills and information facilities increasing people’s physical and intellectual resources’. Emancipative cultural change refers to, ‘strengthening people’s desire to have free choice and control over their lives’ (Welzell et al., 2003: 345). Democracy meaning, “institutionalising legal rights that guarantee choices in people’s private and public activity” (Welzell et al., 2003: 345). Human development theory ensures that an individual’s right to their choice of social and economic development is achieved. For instance, education ensures social and economic development and democracy made sure that education is a right for all people. In turn people get to choose what they want to study so as to pursue a career of choice.

Human beings were born with certain potential capabilities that when given the enabling platform they can sustainably grow their capabilities and their opportunities (United Nations Development Programme, 1994). “The real foundation of human development is universalism in acknowledging the life claims of everyone” (United Nations Development Programme, 1994: 13). “Universalism of life claims can be said to mean that “development must enable all individuals to enlarge their human capabilities to the fullest and to put those capabilities to the best use in all fields - economic, social, cultural and political” (United Nations Development Programme, 1994). Individuals should each have a claim to the life they aspire to live. They should be able to work towards expanding their capabilities in every aspect of their life. These aspirations can be achieved through, “equity in opportunities not necessarily in final achievements. Everyone is entitled to a just opportunity to make the best use of his or her potential capabilities and so is each generation. How they use these opportunities, and the results they achieve, are a matter of their own choice, but they must have such a choice - now and in the future” (United Nations Development Programme, 1994: 13). With regards to the Deaf, they should be taught all the available subjects whether they pass or fail. This would be giving them the ‘opportunity’ to achieve their aspired goals in life instead of having stakeholders limit their ‘opportunities’.

The concept by United Nations Development Programme, (1994: 24) of ‘human security’ states that human beings have the capacity to look after themselves, meet their required needs and pay for their livelihood as they will have the freedom to develop themselves, their communities, their countries and the world. There are seven characteristics of human security which are, economic, food, environment, community, health, personal and political, but just one is relevant to this study. Economic security “requires an assured basic income - usually from productive and remunerative work, or in the last resort from some publicly financed safety net” (United Nations Development Programme, 1994: 25). The Deaf people should also have economic security by means of having ‘productive and remunerative work’ that will provide them with an income that ensures a decent standard of living. Employment is a vital form of having economic security that is why this study seeks to explore the phenomena at hand.

2.3.2. Capability Approach

Capability approach is a social development theory. It refers to when individuals have the right to choose opportunities and act on them because their choices influence their wellbeing. (Sen, 1991). According to Robeyns (2005: 94) it ‘focuses on what people are effectively able to do and

to be”. It is a “tool used to conceptualize and evaluate several aspects of people’s well-being, such as inequality, poverty, and the well-being of an individual” (Robeyns, 2005: 94). The capability approach’ principle stipulates that “the ends of well-being, justice and development should be conceptualized in terms of people’s capabilities to function; that is, their effective opportunities to undertake the actions and activities that they want to engage in, and be whom they want to be” (Robeyns, 2005: 95). The Deaf people should have an inclusive educational and employment system that will give them the opportunity to choose what they want to study and which career they want to take up.

2.4 Policy and Legislation

Constitution of Zimbabwe

The Zimbabwean constitution serves as the legislation premise for this study. The constitution under Part 2 - Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms, Section 56.4 Equality and Non-discrimination states that “Every person has the right not to be treated in an unfairly discriminatory manner on such grounds of disability...” (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013: 21). The Deaf people should not be discriminated in any work environment due to their impairment.

Section 64, Freedom of Profession, Trade or Occupation states that, “Every person has the right to choose and carry on any profession, trade or occupation, but the practice of a profession, trade or occupation may be regulated by law” (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013: 23). “Every person” also refers to the speech and hearing people, therefore, they should be given opportunities that empower them to choose and carry out a profession of their choice.

Under Part 3 Elaboration of certain Rights, Section 83 Rights of Persons with Disabilities states that, “The State must take appropriate measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to ensure that persons with disabilities realize their full mental and physical potential” (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013: 32). With special attention to subsection 83 (e) which states that the above statement should include measures “to provide special facilities for their education” (Zimbabwe Constitution, 2013: 32). The school examinations should be carried out using sign language. This will be a ‘special facility’ that will enhance the Deaf’s opportunities on the labor market as they are likely to attain better grades as a result of the ‘special facility’. In this case sign language examinations.

Prohibition of discrimination against disabled persons in employment 1992

This is a Zimbabwe Disability Persons Act, (2018) it stipulates that, “no employer shall discriminate against any disabled person in all aspects of employment matters”. The Act also states that it will “formulate and develop measures and policies designed to achieve equal opportunities for disabled persons”. These opportunities include education, employment and welfare. This Act’s mandate is very outdated as the development has since shifted from welfarism to human development. To date, Zimbabwe has not amended this Act and a new disability policy has been said to be underway for more than 10 years now and nothing has materialized (Muchetu, 2017). The phenomenon of this research substantiates Muchetu’s notion of nothing having been done to ensure effective implementation of the act. The Deaf’s education system is still discriminatory. The quality of employment has remained informal not to mention the welfare which was completely done away with.

2.5 Conclusion

The literature reviews supports the phenomenon of this research. Unemployment although not specific to the Deaf, overall it is a problem in Zimbabwe and they are affected. In other countries the same phenomenon has since been observed and appropriate measures were taken to alleviate the issues surrounding disability unemployment. Two social development theories namely human development and capabilities approach were used as frameworks of analysis. The constitution of Zimbabwe and the Zimbabwean Disability Act formed the policy and legislation for this research. The employment situation in Zimbabwe is very dire as there is lack of job creation due to the failing economy. Deaf individuals are not formally employed and struggle to even be informally employed. Despite the dire employment situation in Zimbabwe, there are no initiatives being made to pave way for the inclusion of the Deaf people on the job market. Limited research exists on the speech and hearing people’s employment challenges in Zimbabwe.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The research was carried out using a qualitative research design. According to Leedy & Ormrod, (2010: 135) qualitative research entails ‘studying a phenomenon in all their complexity’. There are five types of qualitative research which are case study, ethnography, phenomenological, grounded theory and content analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). This research employed the phenomenological type because they have had personal experiences related to the phenomenon and sought to gain a deeper understanding of those who have experienced it.

“The qualitative research paradigm refers to research that portrayed the participant experiences in their own written or spoken words. It sought to understand the participant’s beliefs and values that underlie the phenomena (De Vos et al., 2005: 74). In this case, the researcher sought to understand the Deaf persons’ perception of their employment prospects. The aim is to have a ‘complete detailed description’ of their perceptions within a country that is already facing employment struggles (Welthagen and Badenhorst, 2010: 43).

According to Creswell (2014: 234), qualitative research design has the following characteristics, “natural setting, researcher as key instrument, multiple sources of data”. The researcher went to King George VI School in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe where some of the participants had studied before. The researcher was the ‘key instrument’ meaning the researcher collected the data themselves. Interviews and observations were sources of data. Then the researcher reviewed all of the data, made sense of it, and organized it into categories or themes that cut across all of the data sources which is called ‘inductive and deductive data analysis’. The analysis was earnestly based on the participants’ information which according to Creswell is termed ‘participants meanings’. Another characteristic included was the “emergent design” meaning that there was room for changing the methodology totally or some parts of it. A “holistic account” of the data collected was reported by the researcher. The researcher initially used the term, ‘speech and hearing-impaired’ but changed it to Deaf after data collection in respect of the findings in the bid of true representation as alluded by (De Vos, et al., 2005).

3.2 Population and sampling

Non-probability sampling was used to get twenty Deaf Zimbabweans who were purposefully selected, and snowballing sampling was used. According to, Leedy & Ormrod, (2010) when conducting a phenomenological study sampling should be at least five to twenty five people (2010:

146). Purposive sampling means choosing participants that have experienced the phenomenon (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005). Snowballing means having a participant that was purposefully selected, refer the researcher to other participants that would have experienced the phenomenon (De Vos et al., 2005: 330). Participants were mixed; there was no specific gender or race. They were over 21 of age to make them more likely to have had experienced the problem. The participants had completed their secondary education. Some of them were employed and some unemployed but the ones who completed the interviews were employed.

The researcher went to King George VII in Bulawayo, where she spoke to the principal of the school. The principal referred her to school representatives who then organized meetings between the researcher and some of the former students with their consent. Some of the participants were from Gweru and they attended a prominent church. The church is not named to ensure confidentiality of the participants who could be readily identified if the church is identified. Through her family network, the researcher's father referred an interpreter at the church who then linked the researcher with some of the Deaf members at the church. The latter referred the researcher to other participants who did not attend the church. The research objectives were explained thoroughly to the participants and they gave their consent before starting the interviews. Due to the information the researcher got during the interviews, the researcher also spoke to three teachers to verify the information by have an understanding from the teacher's perspective.

3.3 Data Collection

According to Creswell (2014: 137) in social research, the researcher must "respect the site, and disrupt as little as possible...by being cognizant of their impact and minimize their disruption of the physical setting". In this study, the researcher did her best not to interfere with the participant's schedules by agreeing on the most convenient time for both. The participants were made aware of the research objectives to avoid deceiving them.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to kick start the conversation. Data was recorded with the permission of the participants. An audio of the interpreter's voice was recorded. The participants were given time to verify what they had signed, with what the interpreter had translated after transcription was done. Exploitation of participants was avoided by making sure the aims and the objectives of the study were thoroughly explained to the participants. They were fully aware what they were participating for and the researcher did not pay the participants. No harmful data

was collected, but some of the respondents in Gweru chose to drop out because the interviews evoked feelings of intense exclusion experienced from their childhood. Consistent with the ethical consideration of doing no harm these persons could withdraw from the study without having to substantiate their reasons. To some the realization that they have been living a life of exclusion was too much for them to handle. The researcher was bound by the ethics of respecting the privacy of the participants and not include the information in the research. The researcher also helped them to calm down and explained that this research was a step towards yielding recommendations for change. The researcher referred to seek further assistance from the counsellors and pastors at their church. At King George VI school there was no emotional harm recorded.

3.4 Data Analysis

In this research, Tesch's eight steps of the coding process were used for data analysis (Cresswell, 2014). These steps are,

1. The researcher read all the transcriptions to get a sense of the whole (what the participants were saying overall).
2. The researcher picked one interview and re-read it while reflecting on what the interview was about and the deeper meaning of the data before writing down any ideas about the interview in the margin.
3. The researcher made a list of all the topics and grouped together topics which were similar, and these topics were then organized into a table under the headings "Major Topics", "Unique Topics" and "Leftovers".
4. The researcher used the list of topics and returned to the transcriptions so the topics could be abbreviated as codes and written next to the relevant text.
5. The researcher then found words which best described the topics, turned the topics into "Themes", "Categories" and "Subcategories" which reduces the number of topics by grouping them together.
6. The researcher made the last decision on the abbreviations for each category and listed these codes alphabetically.
7. The researcher assembled the data material belonging to each category in one place and performed the analysis.
8. Lastly, the researcher recorded the data when required.

3.5 Data Verification

According to Creswell (2014), data verification is “one of the strengths in qualitative research”. Verifying data means ensuring exact reporting of the data as viewed by the researcher, the participants and the reader. It seeks to ensure credibility of the study (Cresswell, 2014). In this study, the member checking method was used to verify data. Member checking entails going back to the participants and hearing their opinions on the report of the findings (Cresswell, 2014). This was done through ‘WhatsApp’ communications as the researcher and the participants stay far apart. The researcher sent findings report to most of the participants that were available on WhatsApp so that they would see how the researcher had presented their information. The participants gave their positive feedback through the same channel.

3.6 Limitations of the study

The research was carried out in Gweru and Bulawayo only. The intention of the study was to try to collect data in all big cities so as to have a nationwide perspective. However, the researcher managed to interview people from most parts of Zimbabwe because although the participants were now staying in the two cities Gweru and Bulawayo most of them grew up in other cities. That is where they had experienced the phenomena. Therefore, although restricted to certain areas, the views from participants nationally were integrated.

The researcher had the help of interpreters during the interviews. There is a possibility that the depth of the experiences could have been lost in the interpreter’s translation and therefore not fully capturing their holistic experience. However, the researcher was at least able to understand most of the information because of their ability to use sign language.

3.7 Reflexivity

The researcher is the only hearing child with two Deaf siblings. The researcher at one point walked around with the elder sister helping her look for a job because the sister needed an interpreter just like one of the participants related. To this day the researcher still gets messages from the sister and her husband to explain a word, for example, recently they asked me what ‘increase’ meant. Each time they ask me to explain what a word means it reminds of the fact that they did not get a proper English education, not even proper for them to be able to understand a dictionary meaning on their own. It is disempowering. The researcher has since learnt to read the way the deaf write their English and can comprehend it very well and yet it should not be so. The deaf should be able to write English properly. The researcher has a little sister who is still in high school but is being taught practice-based subjects that she is not interested in. Her interests are in science subjects,

you often find her teaching herself mathematics and she does amazingly well for a self-taught child. The world would be her oyster given the right enabling environment and the same is true for every Deaf child. Many more heartbreaking experiences however, the researcher understood and was aware that her passion for this research could be emotionally exhausting and it was. The researcher was not biased as she sought to holistically explore the real reasons behind the phenomena. This was for the benefit of the Deaf's future as this study could inform different policies in the future, policies that will ensure the Deaf's holistic personal and social development.

3.8 Conclusion

This study used a qualitative design in order to explore the phenomena at hand. The selection of the sample was done purposefully and through snowballing. The collection of data was done through interviews and visual recording. Tesch's eight steps were used for data analysis and the data was verified using member checking. Limitations were inevitable. However, the study was carried out to the best of the researcher's ability to provide credible information in this research area.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Research Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings and discusses them. Four major themes were coded from the data and these are perception of self, employment, education and social exclusion. Each of the main themes had categories and sub categories that further discussed the phenomena as experienced by the participants.

Demographic profile of the participants

Table 1

Participant number	Gender	Age	Race	Education	Occupation
1	Male	34	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Works in the kitchen
2	Female	32	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Dressmaker but a stay at home mother
3	Female	30	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Hairdresser
4	Male	30	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Carpenter
5	Male	35	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Upholsterer
6	Male	31	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Upholsterer
7	Male	29	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Vendor
8	Male	27	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Vendor
9	Female	26	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Matron
10	Female	36	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Cook
11	Female	28	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Cook
12	Male	27	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Gardner
13	Female	24	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Not occupied
14	Male	25	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Not occupied
15	Female	24	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Class interpreter
16	Female	24	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Class interpreter
17	Female	25	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Admin assistant
18	Male	33	Black	Zimsec Ordinary level	Vendor
19	Male	30	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Admin and class interpreter
20	Female	26	Black	Hexco Ordinary level	Hairdresser

The table above shows biographic details of the twenty participants who participated in this research. There were ten males and ten females between the ages of 20 and 36. All of them were black African as the Zimbabwean population is largely dominated by black Africans. The individuals were all selected on the basis that they are Deaf people who have completed their basic primary education and their secondary education and are living in Zimbabwe. Some of the participants sat for Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO) while others sat for Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC). Most of the participants repeated grades more than three times either in primary or secondary education. It was so, because they could only proceed to the next level when everyone in their class had ‘supposedly’ comprehended the content. The table also shows that most of the participants were informally employed.

Framework of Analysis

Table 2

Main theme	Category	Sub-category
Perception of self	Positive sense of self	Yes, I am deaf, so what? (Resignation)
		Enabling environment
	Acknowledging reality of being deaf	
	Aspirations	Desire to continue with their education
Employment	Limited opportunities	Quest for real jobs
		Dissatisfaction with Current jobs
	Awareness of job opportunities	Technology limitations
	Restricted work environment	Challenges at work
	Living conditions	

Education	Basic education	Practice based subjects
		Frustration with incompetence of practice based subjects on the job market
		Education influences employment opportunities
	Discriminatory curriculum	
	Language	Lack of sign language capable teachers
		“Not all of us can lip read”
		“Our English is different”
		Terminology according to whom?
	Assessment	Inappropriate examination methods
Social exclusion	Poor Public service	
	Societal prejudice	Stigma
	Lack of consultation	Exclusion from decision making

1. Perception of self

How one defines who they are and understand themselves is ‘influenced by their own observations of their behaviors and the situations on which these behaviors manifest which is urged by their

sense to belong in any society' (Bem, 1972). Bem, (1972) further says that how other people view an individual also influences their understanding of who they think themselves to be. The participants became aware of their deafness and its limitations when they were still young playing outside with children their age. Such awareness influenced how they carried themselves around their hearing counterparts. Self-perception can empower or disempower a person.

1.1 Positive sense of self

A positive sense of self can be best understood through understanding empowerment and disempowerment. Luttrell et al. (2009: 1) identifies the different dimensions of empowerment as, "human and social empowerment, economic empowerment, political empowerment and cultural empowerment." Empowerment can be defined as a person attaining power and as a result of that power, they will be able to decide over their lives (Edlund, 2016: 8). Luttrell et al., (2009: 2) argues that "In the 1980s, empowerment was seen, for the most part, as a radical project of social transformation, to enable otherwise excluded social groups to define and claim their rights collectively". Both definitions spoke to human and social empowerment. Economic empowerment refers to the 'need to make sure that people have the appropriate skills, capabilities and resources and access to secure and sustainable incomes and livelihoods.

Related to this, some organisations 'focus heavily on the importance of access to assets and resources' (Luttrell et al., 2009: 1). Ideally, empowerment in this context is noted through the participants' acceptance of their deafness and the acknowledgment that they need an 'enabling environment' to become economically empowered (Paffenholz and Spurk 2006). The idea of disempowerment means being 'powerless, disadvantaged and being denied the full participation in the decision-making that affects their lives' (Fraher & Limpinnian, 1999: 127). The participants by default felt they had their power stripped off.

All my siblings can drive, and I was not taught how to drive. They said it would be hard for me

I cannot drive, no one taught me. My family fear that I will cause accidents because I cannot hear. I don't think you need to hear other cars to be able to drive.

You know in primary school when they ask you what you want to be when you grow up. I wanted to be a nurse, but I was told to forget about it

You know I can fix cars very well, but no one trusts me to work alone. I always have supervision, why why why. I do a better job than the person who supervises me and we still share the payment (sighs heavily)

The use of word default suggests the idea that the perpetrators to some extent were not aware of this process of disempowering. The participants' families in trying to protect and help in the case of the mechanic they stripped the participants their power to be able to live a life of their choice. It can be argued that it was a way of protecting the deaf child from their inabilities and yet they should have navigated within those inabilities and found ways to enable their abilities.

1.1.1 Yes, I am deaf, so what? (Resignation)

Accepting their uniqueness was an empowerment step for the participants. From that young age when they became aware of their deafness. As young adults, the act of embracing their deafness and its unique abilities was expressed in the poem by one of the participants. The poem is, titled 'Yes, I am Deaf, so what?' is cited below:

I am deaf so what?

I cannot hear

I cannot speak

Yes, I am deaf so what?

But I have feelings like you

I can think like you

I can learn like you

I can work like you

I can dance like you

Yes, I am deaf so what?

God made me deaf

I don't want to hear

Do not look down upon me because I am deaf

Yes! I am deaf so what?

I am deaf, I can still learn how to drive a car and not put myself or other people in danger

Just because I am deaf does not mean I am dumb, I too can get a university degree and have a fancy job

Being deaf means, I can learn to do things differently, but it does not mean I cannot do it completely

The poem suggested empowerment as a process as alluded to by Luttrell et al. (2009). The poem sought to challenge exclusion of any form influenced by their deafness. It was a process in the case of the participants because they had not reached the “outcome” level where they got to have control over all aspects of their lives. This was further substantiated by the five degrees of empowerment that were noted by (Longwe 1995).

The participants could be said to have had gone through the welfare level, where basic needs were met as required by the constitution of Zimbabwe. The access level could be said to be still flawed because the participants’ education in some few cases did bring out their potential. However, in most cases it did not bring out their full potential but instead it had limited and still continues to limit them as will be explained under the education section below. The poem resembled the ‘conscientisation and awareness-raising’ level because the words in the poem suggest a sense of being aware of their deafness and acceptance. It spoke to their unique capabilities and therefore they should be given a platform to do the fourth level of “participation and mobilization” in anything that requires human participation and mobilization for the purpose of empowerment. Fourth and fifth level would ensure human development capability.

1.1.2 Enabling environment

The participants also realised that within Zimbabwe there were not many enhancing platforms available for them which make it possible for them in their uniqueness to be able to realise their full potential. These platforms could include supportive families, society, schools and work spaces. Amongst the participants were some who said they were familiar with the South African TV program called ‘Deaf TV’ and the American TV series called ‘Switched at Birth’. The former showcases different possibilities available for deaf people while the latter has shown the

participants that there are elaborate deaf schools and universities available. In this respect, some of the participants noted:

Have you watched Deaf TV on SABC 3, in South Africa, there are so many opportunities for people like me? The presenter can even drive, while I cannot even pass the provisional learners test here (Zimbabwe). It is like saying because I am deaf, I must not drive.

They even advertise jobs on the TV show (Deaf TV), jobs like good paying jobs for deaf people.

The presenter once came to Harare for a competition show, you could tell she is living a good life, and it's the same here. I think in South Africa it is better but only if you have a good education I am told. But my education is poor I don't have O' Level.

In America, on that show.... eish the school is beautiful. They even have science experiments room you know for physics and chemistry, but we don't have physics and chemistry for deaf people....

And the family support on the show, it is just beautiful. They learnt how to sign in a short space of time. Maybe it because it is TV so it could be lie, but still the support for the deaf children is great. My parents still write to me on a piece of paper when they want to communicate because at 29, they still do not know how to sign. So why would I expect the neighbors or people in the community to be able to sign.

An enabling environment refers to 'conditions necessary to operate in (Longwe 1995). The fourth level requires the process of enabling the deaf people with the required resources that they needed to be able to reach their full potential. Family support at home - by means of a deaf person's immediate family members learning sign language - so as to ensure smooth communication, could be said to be the start of an 'enabling environment'. Limitations within any environment make it hard to yield credible results (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2006).

The schools, the society and all relevant stakeholders that play a part in any human self enhancement process, play a role in providing an enabling environment. An environment that enables the deaf people to reach level four and five of Longwe's (1995) empowerment stages. The fact that they knew that they need to seek an enabling environment was a promising aspect towards human development. It showed a sense of empowerment because knowledge is power, and it could have a positive impact on their capabilities.

1. 2 Acknowledging reality of being deaf

Most of the participants became aware of the fact that they were deaf while they were still young and as children, they did not know anything different. The difference was first noted when they were playing outside with other children. According to Blose and Joseph (2017) deaf children lacked the ability to communicate with children their age or with their parents because parents did not try to learn sign language which left them in a state of isolation. The same was true for the participants as seen below,

“I did not have friends at home when I was still young, they would always speak over me and it annoyed me.”

“I would never get the joke and so I thought that maybe I was the joke and it always ended up in a fight, me fighting the other children.”

“I only had one friend, my sibling and they would play with me because our parents would tell her to do so. When we went outside to play, she would try to include me but then sometimes she would get carried away and forget I am there. You cannot blame her she was also a child like me.”

“I would always tell my mother that I prefer playing in the house because I was so tired of not feeling like I belong. I would watch the other children play outside through the window.”

“There was this game, hide and seek. Yes, hide and seek you know that one when you hide and there is counting, and you had to get to the position where that person was standing and shout ‘1 2 3 block for myself’. I did not know the words back then so, I would hide and while the seeker is looking for me, I would get to the stoop before they did and would try to shout, and they would come and laugh at the sound of my voice. That's when I knew my

voice was different from theirs and did not like being laughed at all. I would end up fighting them and so my mother banned me from playing outside.”

Most of the participants’ realisation of who they were was initially realised during their encounter with other children with the only difference being that their counterparts were hearing. According Holland et al. (2002) perceptions are based on past behaviors, behaviors that one would have learnt when they participated willingly. The participants willingly played with other children and from their perceptions of who they were, could be said to have had formulated. Furthermore, Bem (1972: 2) stipulates that “in order to identify and label things in his environment, a child must initially have someone else around who will play the “original word game”, of pointing and naming, someone who will teach the child to distinguish between objects and events that appear similar and to label them with different descriptors”. In the case of most participants, their age mates played the “original word game” for them which made them become aware of their deafness. This realization was not followed with any explanation of how to embrace their difference. As a result, they grew up having the hearing people play the ‘original word game’ - in other words the hearing dictated what they could or could not do therefore taking away their ‘power’ to act on their ‘freedoms’ (Fraher and Limpinnian 1999). Freedoms that would have helped them to be socially developed (Sen, 1999).

1.3 Aspirations

Some of the participants still had hope that their future will not be the same. They believed there was still a chance for them to make it in life preferably, to have their own businesses seeing that they were not be able to get formal jobs.

“I can make furniture, very beautiful furniture and one day I will have my own shop and be a good boss.”

“I want to go do interior designing in South Africa because I heard that they have colleges that can teach using sign language, but I am not sure if I will afford too.”

“Maybe one day I will have my own salon.”

“I want to go back to school and write ZIMSEC. I want to go university...I am not sure what it is I want to study but in the science field. I have been taking mathematics and science extra lessons, so I will be writing in November.”

“I am writing mathematics and science in November then I will study information technology (laughs), maybe I will study it I don’t know.”

Aspirations according to Moulton et al. (2014: 107)), “reflect what someone would like to achieve rather than what they think they will achieve. Aspirations are hopes and ambitions in an ideal world”. The participants still aspired to be financially affluent and to study beyond what they have so far, but they were not certain if they would be able to realise their aspirations. Having aspirations is a good thing as it decreases a chance of having depression and or anxiety. This was identified by Moulton et al. (2014: 108) who stated that, “children with higher, compared to lower, future expectations tend to have less anxiety and depression”. As deaf people who already had limited opportunities in life, having aspirations enabled ‘mental stability which is essential for every youth’ (Cooper et al., 2015).

Deaf people have had a disadvantaged start to education and that made their aspirations uncertain. According to Gutman et al., (2014) “adolescents who had lower prior achievement and were from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to have uncertainty in their career aspirations”. Most of the participants had uncertain aspirations because of their weak basic education foundation. In another research by Gutman et al., (2014) uncertainty was “associated with growing up in a relatively disadvantaged family, with parents who did not expect their children to continue in education, as well as with low academic attainment, low levels of school motivation and lack of belief in one’s own ability”.

The deaf people were ‘relatively disadvantaged’ by the mere fact that they are deaf; and poor-quality education as well as lack of motivation also added to these points which will be elaborated on in the sections below. The idea in this instance is that, the deaf people’s aspirations were highly uncertain because they are deaf. Failure to have a platform that enables their aspirations to be met or at least try to be met, spoke to the ‘discursive nature of social exclusion which asserts social exclusion as a process affected by personal factors’ (Ward, 2009). A ‘disabling environment’ affected the deaf people’s capabilities to achieve human development (Paffenholz & Spurk, 2006).

1.3.1 Desire to continue with their education

Most of the participants were taking extra lessons in different ZIMSEC subjects including mathematics and science so that they could write the ZIMSEC Ordinary level examinations. They

still believed that having ZIMSEC five ordinary levels could open more opportunities for them. The participants said;

“To be a teacher or a nurse they want five O’ Levels, and I don’t have even one that’s why I am taking extra lessons.”

“In Zimbabwe to proceed with school you need ZIMSEC O’ level so I am also trying to go further with my education but for now I am stuck here...I am stuck because I am studying two subjects per years so that I master the technique of writing like a hearing person.”

“Education is the key to success, and I want to be successful so I will keep trying. (Laughs).”

“I haven’t given up yet. I want to study interior design and I will one day.”

The participants were aware that education influences employment and that is why they were working towards enhancing themselves academically to have the skills required for executive forms of employment (Stanislav et al. 2015 and Varga et al. 2016). Having skills would mean being able to compete on the ‘formal labor market’ instead of being solely left to try to thrive under the ‘informal market’.

However, the deaf people should not be struggling with rewriting exams and going for extra classes so as to pass years after the stipulated given period of study. There is need to ‘overcome school failure’ (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010). Overcoming failure would be tackling the problem at the root cause and in this case the education system. The deaf should not have to incur extra expenses to meet the required education standards which should have been given to them at the time they were enrolled formally in school for secondary level. According to the OECD, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, (2010) “firstly, overcoming school failure implies ensuring a basic minimum standard education for each and every student (inclusion). Secondly, since not all individuals are equal, reducing school failure in a targeted way allows strengthening equality of opportunities (fairness)” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2010: 1).

In this case the deaf need to have tailor-made resources that ensure that the learning process and examination is inclusive. There is need to take into consideration that the deaf people's 'comprehension levels' are different from the hearing students (Kyle & Cain, 2015). There is need to have relevant measures taken to include them in the learning process, therefore enabling their human development process.

2. Employment

There are many youths grappling with unemployment or poor quality of employment (Booyens & Crause, 2012). The Deaf individuals are also in the same group. However, their unemployment case has an even unique complication which is the fact that they cannot hear or speak. This leaves them feeling angry and frustrated which is no different from the feelings the unemployed hearing youth feel as well (Barrar, 2010). A level of disregarding the Deaf youths as being equals to the hearing youths hit them with a sense of their reality of being "deaf".

2.1 Limited opportunities

There were not many employment opportunities for the deaf individuals. Informal employment was the only employment opportunity for them and even then, their opportunities were limited because they were deaf. The participants being all informally employed had an idea of what real employment entails and therefore they were greatly unsatisfied with the current jobs they were doing.

2.1.1 Quest for real jobs

According to the participants, all jobs are not the same. The jobs they had were 'just jobs' while there are 'real jobs. Their definition of real jobs is,

"You know when you work in an office and have a desk and a chair, wear a tie and a suit and carry your laptop."

"When you get to have a salary come in every month and can afford to live in a big house and can also buy clothes on account. You know they need a pay slip to open an account in Edgars and where do I get one?"

"To get a medical aid, my sister has medical aid and she doesn't worry about needing cash when she needs to go see a doctor but me, eish, I need cash or go to the government hospital and they don't have medication. I can only get a medical aid with a real job."

“When my brother died his family got money from NSSA (National Social Security Authority), what am I going to leave for my children when I die? Because I do not have a ‘real job’ my children will suffer.”

The idea of a ‘real job’ being one which required an individual to wear a suit was dominant among the participants. Wearing of formal clothing in Zimbabwe signifies that one has an office job which was deemed a ‘real job’ by the participants. Barrar, (2010) also noted the aspect of youths elaborate distinction of an ordinary job to a ‘real job’. None of the participants had ‘real jobs’ and it can be argued that there could be a sense of inferiority which could lead to psychological problems. Mlatsheni and Leirbrandt (2011) stated that there is ‘psychological harm as result of joblessness’ and it could also be as a result of poor-quality jobs. This could be further supported by the idea that they could not afford to buy clothes on account because of poor quality jobs, making them feel more socially inferior.

A medical aid policy is important in Zimbabwe in this current year 2019, where government doctors have been repeatedly on work strikes. Many patients were dying due to the strike and private health was the only alternative (Muronzi, 2019). The deaf, among other citizens, find themselves affected by these strikes and since they cannot afford medical aid to access private healthcare because they do not have a pay slip that shows they earn a stable income to be able to pay the monthly medical aid installments. ‘Health care is a basic human right’ and although most Zimbabweans do not having these rights, for the deaf their options have always been limited due to lack of having options (United Nations Development Programme, 1994). Amid a national crisis they still find themselves further deprived of healthcare, be it private or public.

Life insurance is an important human need (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). In Zimbabwe, insurance companies need to see your pay slip or a guaranteed means of income to have insurance. Most of the participants being in the informal sector they did not qualify for insurance. They were worried about what sort of life their children would have if they were to pass away. Basically, the type of employment they have did not give them a pay slip therefore they were excluded in making choices about their mental health, access to health care and insurance. Not being able to make decisions on their ‘economic facilities, protective security and social opportunities’ hindered the participant’s human development (Sen, 1999).

2.1.2 Dissatisfaction with Current jobs

The participants were not happy with the current jobs they had. The jobs were all informal jobs and they expressed dissatisfaction as they only worked because they needed to earn a living.

“I work in the kitchen, but I want to be a designer. I do not like this job at all, but I need the money.”

“This was the only available job and I took it. Who was going to just give me money?”

“I want to leave but where will I get another job?”

“I work seven days a week no off day. I feel like I am slave.”

“You think I like selling airtime at the street corner whether it is very hot or very cold? No, I do not, but its money and I can’t sit at home. Where will the money come from?”

None of the participants were happy with their current jobs and when an employee is “unhappy they may not pay full attention to any task” (Wesarat et al., 2014). A task underperformed could be bad for any kind of business and it ‘affects the economic growth as substandard work results in bad service delivery and goods produced’ (Krause, 2014). According to McDaid et al (2008) ‘bad business could affect income’ especially for those paid by the hour which means their income will be less, making them unhappier. Less income for the participants could mean more deprivation and incapability to move towards human development (Sen, 2000).

The participant’s unhappiness also spoke to their mental state of mind because, “work proves to be a very important determinant for people’s well-being” (Krause, 2014: 10). Being displeased with the current form of employment left their mental state of mind questionable (Mhlatszeni & Leibbrandt, 2011). Daily fulfillment in one’s duties could be said to alleviate mental distress and unfortunately for the deaf people they did not have a choice. Not having a choice is what Sen speaks against hence he gave the five freedoms.

Their human development could be affected in that, “Mental health is an important driver of labor market outcomes and thus affects economic growth and future development” (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). The deaf people’s development was already hindered by the fact that they were doing informal jobs that did not guarantee a stable income. Their lack of fulfillment further crippled their capabilities to develop because they could have been

depressed, further making it impossible to ‘reach their full potential’ (Sen, 1999). Also, the mental distress could have affected their capability to be developed because they would not be in the right state of mind to focus on personal human development.

2.2 Awareness of job opportunities

There are so many ways to find out about job opportunities. One can learn about a job opportunity by word of mouth, newspaper advertisements, posters in shops and from Google search which has become more viable for job advertisements. Not many companies advertise their jobs in the newspapers anymore as they opt for internet advertisements. The participants expressed difficulties in finding their way around the internet and therefore they missed out on jobs advertised.

2.2.1 Technology limitations

An important finding was that the participants did not know how to use the internet to search for jobs or even advertise their skills. The internet has become a more efficient way of learning about job vacancies and marketing one’s skills. This is what the participant had to say

“Yes, I know how to use the internet...but not to look for jobs. I see job advertisements on the newspaper only.”

“Website aaaah that’s for big businesses only....and I do not have the qualifications they need so why waste my airtime?”

“My sister says she will teach me how to search for jobs, but I usually walk from door to door and ask if they have work for me to do. I don’t have the liberty to be choosy.”

“With no qualification the only jobs are those you learn by word of mouth. You know when your friend or relative tells you someone needs a helper and you check it out.”

“I put my work on my WhatsApp status.”

Advertising your skills on one’s WhatsApp status was not credible enough as it only reached those in their contact list who are already aware of their skills. Their statements could be mistaken for ignorance, however it can be argued that the deaf people’s comprehension levels are low. Deaf people in a study by Kyle & Cain, (2015) show that their comprehension levels are the same with those of ‘poor comprehenders’. Another study in Kenya also showed that the deaf people’s comprehension levels were poor. The study’s research findings showed that most deaf students

finish their secondary education and are still unable to read (Maina, et al., 2014). Furthermore, Luckner and Handley, (2008: 31) stated that,

“Proficiency in reading has assumed an increasingly important role in today’s highly technical society. Given the unacceptably low educational outcomes attained by individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, the increasing importance of print literacy for succeeding in contemporary society, there is an urgent need to increase the quantity and improve the quality of research undertaken in the field of deaf education.

The problem started from the education system that is flawed and it followed the deaf people all the way to adulthood affecting their livelihood. As far as employment is concerned, the lack of proficiency in internet usage as the participants stated affected their capability to job hunt like a hearing human being. It therefore affected the quality of jobs they got and as a result affected their quality of life.

However, in their age group most of them admitted that they did not learn much about using the computer later on the internet. It was only now that they were starting to learn and there were no platforms to teach them in sign language since they were not in school anymore. The world is becoming more technological and the deaf need to adapt so as to able to attain different forms of ‘freedom’ to be socially developed (Sen 2000).

2.2 Restricted work environment

Despite having difficulties getting the types of jobs they desired, most of the participants were informally employed. The participants also shared their work spaces with hearing and deaf colleagues. There were many challenges that they shared making the working conditions unbearable, but because they needed the income they had to endure these circumstances.

2.2.1 Challenges at work

In the working spaces, the deaf find difficulties with communication and face treatment that borders on oppression. To them as a deaf person, when they got a job it is more like the employer took pity on them.

“My boss used to say to me if you are not happy here you can leave, and we will see who will hire a deaf person.”

“I worked as a plumber and I was not the only person who worked for this company, but my hearing counterparts made me do the dirty work. I stayed for a while because I needed the money but eventually, I left.”

“You know how it is when it is time to go home and we are in the workshop and the others hear the boss’s car arriving outside they quickly leave using the back door and leave me to deal with the extra work that the boss would have brought. They know when the boss comes to the workshop it means overtime and he does not pay for overtime so they run and leave me there to do the work.”

“This boss asked me to carry heavy machinery by myself, I quit immediately.”

“I work every day, I do not get off days. If I am sick and don’t go to work, they cut my salary if I get injured on the job, I have to keep working because the supervisor will say be strong, be strong.” (shows me a picture of a bleeding finger injured from a machine used at work, but had to keep working, he had to tie it with a piece of cloth)

“The boss thinks I am stupid. I found out he was paying others more money and I went to his office to ask him why and he kept speaking, when he knows I cannot hear him.”

“One of the workmates hit my bum and I fought with him and I got fired.”

“I got a part time job to clean someone’s house and after I had finished, she gave less money than we had agreed on. When I tried to ask why she said you didn’t hear me well. I don’t know maybe we had misunderstood each other in the beginning because I was reading lips but no I do not think so.”

“They bought airtime using fake notes and I gave them change.” (Laughs)

The deaf are treated unfairly at their places of work, and they thought it was because they were deaf and were at the mercy of the hearing. The working conditions are unbearable and leaving was not an option. A study by Barrar (2010) on youth employment showed that the youths also stated poor working conditions and only chose to continue the work because they needed the income. Being subjected to unhealthy working spaces could impact negatively on their ‘psychological well-being’ thus according to Mlathseni& Leirbrandt (2011). It could then impact their ability to work fruitfully so as to be socially developed. The quality of life the deaf people live with a compromised sense of ‘well-being’ defied the core values of human development.

The statements quoted above bordered more to abuse at work, – being sexually harassed and being forced to work overtime and to do the hard tasks could be registered as abuse. It alludes to ‘having

their power taken from them' and in this case it was because they were deaf (Fraher & Limpinnian, 1999). There was a huge sense of disempowerment in facts like 'being left to do overtime just because all the hearing people left' - if the participant could hear, surely, he would run too. Disempowerment was also noted in getting paid less than what you would have agreed on because of miscommunication.

The statements by the participants alluded to the aspect of bullying. According to the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (2011: 2) "bullying involves a real or perceived imbalance of power". The participant's 'imbalance of power' is in their inability to speak and hear and this inability thwarted their ability to be empowered and have control over the human development (Longwe, 1995). National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability (2011: 2) further explained types of bullying and the kind that the participants encountered can be said to be "emotional/social bullying". Although it was said that 'this form of bullying is harder to define, but generally involved the assertion of social power to cause pain or exclude the target from the social crowd...' and this was what the deaf people have to experience at work. The pain could make them 'unhappy' (Wesarat et al., 2014). In turn they could be counterproductive therefore unable to 'reach their full development socially and economically' (Sen, 1999). There was an aspect of 'exclusion' which also attested to human development hindrance.

2.3 Living conditions

Zimbabwe is classified under the "Low Human development" threshold by the United Nations. (United Nations Development Programme, 2019) Therefore living conditions could be said that most Zimbabweans live under average conditions. Any living human life needs to have access to standard living conditions (Sen, 2000). Some of these living conditions are, 'employment, housing, health care, education' (Bhalla and Laperye, 1997: 415). The participant's main worries were;

"I am going to live in a one roomed home my entire adult life sharing the toilet with more than fifteen people."

"The one room issue I am used to it but the toilets issue, I will never get used to it. I feel for those that have small children and have to use these public toilets." (Scoffs)

“My peers have nice jobs and live in houses that have more space, what about me? Is it because I didn’t make it in school and now, I am here living in this small room?” (Folds hand defeated)

“I share a room me and my friend, it’s going to be a long time before I can even afford a room of my own. I won’t even talk about a big house. My sibling they all live in big houses...I do not even want them to visit, where will they sit?” (Laughs)

“The toilets are disgusting. We take turns to clean but eish they mess it up especially those that have small children. When I saw news about cholera spreading, I thought this place we are all going to perish.”

The participants associated well-being with having a big house and not living in one room. To them living in one room elaborated on their state of deprivation because they were comparing themselves with those that live in big houses (Sen, 2000). This alluded to exclusion being a choice that one puts themselves into, based on comparison (Bhalla and Laperye, 1997: 415). The participants made a choice to feel like their conditions were not acceptable. However, Ataguba et al., (2013) argued that housing conditions are a factor that influence one’s functionality to be able to reach their full potential. Therefore, if the participants felt like their housing conditions were not up to standard as they reiterated, it could be argued that it could affect their functionality to be able to become socially developed.

3. Education

The capabilities approach identifies education as one of the tools needed to realise and reach one’s functioning (Sen, 1999). In another article by Ataguba et al. (2013) education was listed as one of the capability indicators. Education meant completion of primary, secondary and or tertiary qualification (Ataguba et al. 2013). However, all the participants had not been able to complete the Zimbabwean standard level of education which is ZIMSEC. It stirred issues of a discriminatory curriculum, frustration with quality of skills, teaching tools and methods of examination.

3.1 Basic education

Basic education refers to the primary and secondary education. Most of the participants had managed to complete primary and there were many issues surrounding secondary education. The subjects they were taught at secondary level were practice based as they were believed to be unable to comprehend orthodox ZIMSEC subjects.

3.1.1 Practice based subjects

All of the participants at their secondary level were taught practical based subjects. The understanding made by the researcher was that they have low comprehension (Kyle and Cain, 2015). The subjects were dressmaking, hairdressing, woodwork, agriculture, art, music, dance and cooking. These subjects were taught to all deaf participants despite gender, which is a good thing. However, practice-based subjects cannot be used to further their studies from ordinary level to advanced level and later on to university. These subjects are not mainstream subjects and therefore without the combination of mainstream subjects like math, science, history, geography, physics, chemistry, biology, accounts and economics, they cannot further their studies. They have been stuck with the practice-based subjects that left them with not much job opportunities and a measly income to support their livelihood. The curriculum excluded them extensively and still does.

Furthermore, they were made to write HEXCO subjects which were more practical based. ZIMSEC and HEXCO curriculum are very different. The participants were very much aware that at ordinary level in Zimbabwe, pupils write ZIMSEC ordinary level exams but most of them were not given the chance to do so. When asked, this is what they said;

“I wrote HEXCO because they said it will help me get into a technical college, but I am not in college.”

“At the polytechnic they said they cannot accept me because I do not have ZIMSEC ordinary level.”

“When jobs are advertised for some low-level entry jobs, the requirement is ZIMSEC and I don’t have ZIMSEC, I have HEXCO.”

“The hearing are examined with ZIMSEC and why not us.”

“This HEXCO that they make us write doesn’t give us an opportunity after we have completed. They want ZIMSEC for A level, so by writing HEXCO it means no A level for me and it means no university for me.”

The school had decided for them that they should write Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO) and it was beyond their control. This is a form of disempowerment because the deaf people were not left to make decisions about their lives on their own. According to Longwe, (1995) the need of having control over the decisions about one’s own livelihood as the fifth degree

of empowerment. However, from the statements above the deaf were still at the welfare stage where decisions are imposed on them (Longwe 1995). This defies the aspect of development being ‘development by the people for the people’ because a group of people decided their capabilities based on their failure to pass the ZIMSEC (Davids, 2005). The same group of people did not sit down to research on the underlying problem - instead they solved the problem at the surface. It spoke to poor ‘social planning’ which according to York (1982) is “designed to enhance social functioning by either changing the structural relations among the people or providing a tangible support that enables an individual to cope with or overcome a social problem”.

The shift from writing ZIMSEC to HEXCO could be said to have not provided the deaf with the ‘tangible support’ they needed. Writing HEXCO was solving a problem at the surface and it still rendered the deaf incapable to socially develop. It took away their power to be able to thrive in their uniqueness had they been given the resources that enabled them to do so. Being given these resources would be dealing with the problem at the root.

3.1.2 Frustration with incompetence of practice-based subjects on the job market

Instead of standard high school subjects, all the participants were taught different skills at their respective high schools. These skills included: bookkeeping, business English, hairdressing, business calculations, horticulture, food preparation, computer and packages, embroidery soft and furnishing and art. These skills are entry level at poly technical colleges that examine using HEXCO. However, these skills were not competent enough for the deaf to compete with a hearing person who has a degree in agriculture, mechanical engineering, or information technology. Job competency is “where “employers make competency profiles either to evaluate candidates for a job or to determine where an employee needs to improve to meet the needs of the position” (Stanislav et al., 2015: 58).

“It is not that I do not know how to fix cars, but big companies will not hire me because I do not have a diploma or a degree. So, I am self-employed and fix for people who give me an opportunity to prove myself but not may believe I can do it.”

“I can design furniture and make it from scratch to a finished product, but my boss pays someone with a design degree and I just make the furniture. Some of the designs I know I can do better but I do not have a diploma or degree, so it is what it is. At least I have a job.”

“Hearing people do not want me to do their hair because they think I cannot. I even show them pictures and they still think it was not me who did the hairstyle.”

“I am a cook, but I am stuck cooking for a military canteen because no one will offer me a job in any restaurant. In fact, my skills are a thing of the past now because I cook the same things every day at work.”

“I love to design clothes but the skills I have learnt so far are just basics and I have done my research and know there is more to design than what I know.”

The skills that were imparted to them as an alternative for not writing ZIMSEC ordinary level exams were not competent on the job market as they have experienced. Varga et al., (2016) say that there is no clear definition of competencies, yet one major characteristic in their paper was ‘skill’. “Competencies are individual characteristics, including knowledge, skills, abilities, self-image, traits, mindsets, feelings, and ways of thinking, which, when used with the appropriate roles, achieve a desired result” (Society for Human Resource Management, 2012: 5). Competency has also been defined by means of characteristics which are, “motives, traits and attitudes, self-concept, knowledge and skills” with emphasis on skills (Stanislav et al., 2015: 62).

For deaf people, without good skills they cannot develop their capabilities therefore human development will be a challenge for them. The skills which they have gained are not enough for them and although they navigate within the insufficiency and try to earn a living, they should not have to as it is a human right to access education. Navigating within the insufficiency could be said to be a human development obstacle because their ‘functionality’ was not being realised (Sen, 2000). In this case, quality and effective education was lacking because the education they got was incompetent. With the incompetent skills, the job hunting became tedious and income was affected which affected a lot of other capabilities.

3.1.2.1 Education influences employment opportunities

In Zimbabwe, the sequence of an individual development is passing Ordinary and Advanced level, going to university and then getting a job. The more educated one is, the more their chances of getting a good job. Even executive job advertisements require certain levels of education accomplishment. The advertisements often read: ‘a master’s degree in the field is an added

advantage' while the highest form of education most of the deaf people in Zimbabwe have attained is ordinary level with poor passes or no passes at all.

This is what the participants had to say;

"Maybe if I had a degree, I would be working in nice office too."

"Have you seen the newspaper adverts for jobs, they want a person with a diploma, degree and now they say masters is better and me I don't even have a diploma." (Laughs)

"I interpret for the teacher here in class but because I don't have a diploma or degree in education, I do not qualify to teach but I know the content."

"You know, me I assist in the office administration but without the proper qualification I will always be an assistant and earn less."

"In my family they all have good jobs because why, they have degrees. But me I am the only one with no nice job because why, I do not have a degree."

Matus et al. (2014), explained the need to equip the youth workforce with necessary skills to be able to compete on the labor market. Stanislav et al., (2015) and Varga, et al., (2016) also adhered to the need for skills to be able to compete for a job. A skill is acquired through education and mostly the skills needed at work are obtained at higher tertiary institutions – that is technical colleges and universities. The deaf participants' failure to get to these levels of education then rendered them incapable of getting the executive jobs that they desire to have. Barrar (2010), also noted the link between education and quality employment. Despite the high unemployment rate in Zimbabwe, without the right education employment opportunities were also limited.

Without a good education, the participants could not get a good job. Education and good quality of employment are indicators that enable one to reach their full potential (Ataguba et al., 2013). Therefore, the deaf people could not reach their full potential of human development because they did not get the good education as a result, they did not get the executive formal employment. This could be said to affect their 'economic freedom' as they would only be limited to 'informal jobs' that restrict insurance, medical aid and credit scores. (Sen 1999 and Kingdon and Knight 2004). Furthermore, "being excluded from the opportunity to be employed or to receive credit may lead to economic impoverishment that may, in turn, lead to other deprivations such as

undernourishment or homelessness” (Sen 2000: 5). A good mode of transport and good housing conditions are mentioned by Ataguba et al., (2013) as some of the measure of one’s capability.

3.2 Discriminatory curriculum

Half of the participants faced challenges in school from primary to secondary education. They were not taught the mainstream ZIMSEC subjects. Mainstream subjects are crucial in Zimbabwe because for a pupil to get to university level, they must first pass their ordinary level exams and continue to advanced level exams. From there they go to university and get a degree and compete for a job on the job market. The deaf pupils did not have the same opportunity because it was taken away from them. The reason being based on the idea that the deaf pupils have difficulty to comprehend (Kyle and Cain, 2015).

The researcher asked three different teachers at King George school if one of the reasons for removing ZIMSEC exams was because of poor comprehension, and they concurred with Kyle and Cain (2015); Maina et al. (2014) and Luckner and Handley (2008) findings in their respective researches. This is what they said,

“The school decided to do away with ZIMSEC because of the poor pass rate and introduced HEXCO subjects which are basic introductory content to the respective subjects. The school had an agreement with the principal at Bulawayo poly technical college to then accept the students and the college so that they can further their study as a continuation of the introductory level they had at high school. This did not happen because then the principal changed, and their agreement was null and void.”

“The deaf pupils cannot read and write English the way hearing pupils do, and as a result sitting for a ZIMSEC examination was hard for them hence the change to HEXCO.”

“Writing English is a problem for most deaf pupils. Even reading the way the exams are structured, it confuses the deaf. It is not like they do not know the answers but when a question is phrased differently it is hard for them.”

However, the changes were not effective as the participants expressed dissatisfaction in the curriculum. The changes suggest that the participants were excluded from decision making. The changes were based on the perceptions of the educators rather than designing the curriculum to be responsive to the needs of the deaf. As a result, it could be said that there was no human

development because their educational capabilities would not have been fully explored therefore their opportunities to use their capabilities was limited (United Nations Development Programme, 1995). Being unable to write the country's main examinations made them frustrated because they did not have the skills to equip them to go to the next academic stage. The school of thought that influenced this idea of skipping ZIMSEC was questionable. It was also important to note that the students at polytechnic colleges where HEXCO was the examining board were required to have a ZIMSEC certificate when applying for a place and yet the deaf were made to skip ZIMSEC.

They were excluded from the national process of educating a Zimbabwean and are still expected to compete for jobs with those that were included in the national process. Furthermore, they were excluded from the 'Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) initiative that was still running in Zimbabwe for the students that show prowess in the STEM field and have their fees paid for by the government' (Chitate, 2016). Indeed STEM subjects are not for everyone even the hearing but, how will we know if there are no deaf pupils with STEM prowess if they are not given the opportunity to explore it. A government that is supposed to ensure they get their right to education further limited their already limited opportunities. The measuring tool here was not balanced as the standard of education was different already and imbalanced (Cresswell, 2014). The curriculum disempowered the deaf people and stands as an obstacle to their human development because education plays a major role in one's development.

3.3 Language

The deaf use sign language as a communication tool. The sign language is in English but the way they sign and then write their English was different from the way hearing people write their English. The researcher observed that when writing the hearing's logical flow is from right to left while the deaf is from left to right. For the deaf pupils, the teachers are supposed to be able to teach in sign language as it is the means of communication for the deaf pupils.

3.3.1 Lack of sign language capable teachers

Teachers are significant in any school structure. Their role as educators is pivotal for the students in their learning process. The participants however complained that most of their primary and secondary teachers were not well versed in sign language which posed learning difficulties for them.

“She would expect us to lip read. Lip reading is not easy for me especially when they talk fast. You tell them to slow down but along the way they forget and eventually you don’t even tell them to slow down; you just look and pretend to understand.”

“She would ask one of the students who was good at lip reading to then explain to us, it was not easy for the student too.”

“My teachers were horrible, (Laughs), they were just horrible and would always get signs messed which was funny.”

“My teachers were average, not very good but average.”

The teacher’s ability to be able to explain their content in sign language, a language that a person understands is crucial. Luckner and Handley (2008) after reviewing different articles on deaf reading comprehension, concluded that the teacher needs to employ ‘explicit comprehensive teaching steps to make sure the learners comprehend’. Comprehension is of utmost importance for the deaf learners because it enables them to be able to grasp the subjects (Maina et al., 2014). Sign language is the deaf people’s main source of communication and if they cannot be taught in the way they understand then the methods of education are not effective. Therefore, they cannot be expected to fully comprehend the content of the respective subjects.

Above, the participants related how difficult reading and writing English is and Luckner and Handley, (2008: 31-32) suggests that it was because the teachers had;

“an intuitive belief that has guided the field of education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing is that a hearing loss prohibits access to the phonological system of the English language. Consequently, most teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing do not incorporate the teaching of phonology—the association of sounds with the letters and the letter sequences they represent—into their reading instruction.”

This belief has since been observed by LaSasso (1978) and in 2019 the same phenomena still exists among the education of the deaf people. In America, as stated by Luckner & Handley (2008), they have since done and are still doing extensive research. They have since come up with teaching techniques that enable the deaf to comprehend the art of reading and writing using the right phonology. Also, being able to sign enhances the teacher’s ability to deliver the techniques. Having resources - in this case having teachers that make the learning process accessible - would ensure social development of the deaf people. A study by Lambwe (2017) also attested to the need for

resources for deaf pupils to reach their full potential in school. They would be able to get the ‘skills’ needed to compete on the job market regardless of their being deaf.

3.3.2 “Not all of us can lip read”

There is an assumption that most deaf people are good at lip reading yet not all deaf people can lip read well (Goss, 2003). However, in the case of the participants most of them could lip read but they were not very good at it. The statement, ‘not all of us can lip read’ was expressed by most of the participants. Their limited ability to lip read was learnt involuntarily.

“I try to lip read because that’s the only way I can communicate to my parents, they are not very good at sign language so when it gets too difficult, I have to lip read what they will be saying. I cannot read everyone’s lips though....I am used to my family’s and they know they have to be a little slow for me to get what they are saying.”

(Shakes head vehemently) “Not all of us can lip read. It is not as easy as they say or think it is and it frustrates me when a hearing person walks up to me because they see the hearing aid, they start speaking with their mouths wide open expecting me to lip read. It makes me angry and I just look at them.”

“I can lip read my close family only. It took years to learn. On other people it’s really not that easy.”

“Lip read for what? No no no no, my eyes will be overworking.” (Laughs)

“Even the teachers expect us to lip read but they are hearing so they think it comes easy for us.”

They seemed frustrated at the fact that they had to go the extra mile to learn how to lip read when their hearing counter parts did not go the extra mile to learn sign language. Lip reading takes two people to make it a credible tool of communication. The one who is speaking also plays an important part in the process because if they are “mumbling, fast speech or shouting, subject turns away, walks to and from, or nods, hands are placed in front or over the mouth, eating, drinking or smoking whilst talking, moustache and/or beard and poor lighting” (BID Services, n.d: 14). These obstacles are to be considered by the hearing as they will be communicating with the deaf. The factors to consider are, “suitable lighting, face to face communication – suitable distance (3ft –

6ft), eye contact, facial expression, body language and gesture and rephrasing - using sentences rather than individual words” (BID Services, n.d: 15). Communication being a two-way stream, there is need to fully understand what entails lip reading as a mode of communication that hearing people expect the deaf to use and assume that they are good at.

Furthermore, lip reading is said not to be an easy thing to do and that in most cases “Lip-reading is not an exact science and, depending upon the skill and understanding of English, lip readers will understand about 30 - 40% of the conversation; the rest is guess work by linking the sentences together” (BID Services, n.d: 14). For the participants it can be said that it was more difficult to lip read because they stated that they had difficulties in understanding the English language. Also, ‘guess work’ could lead to major miscommunication which might result in conflicts that hinder a person’s human development. Living a conflict free life alludes to ‘protective security’, one of Sen’s freedoms a person needs to have to be developed (Sen, 1999).

However, there is need to teach lip reading amongst the deaf. A study by De los Reyes & Ortiz, (2008: 489) stated that, “children with hearing incapacity access the phonological code through lip reading”. Below, in this paper it will be established that deaf individuals struggle with phonology and researches done show that it could be improved (Silvestri, 2016). Therefore, the deaf people’s ability to comprehend English phonology could be improved. Other scholars however argue that lip reading is ‘insufficient’ because it is not easy to differentiate between some phonemes on the lips (Harris and Moreno 2006; Kyle and Harris 2006).

BID Services (n.d: 15) states that “many words look the same on the lips, like bat, pat and mat whereas other words produce no lip pattern at all” Therefore, it can be said that if taught well, lip reading could aid with deaf people’ s ability to learn English phonology. Although it will be ‘insufficient’ in the extent to which it can go to help with the deaf people’s human development as compared to learning English phonology which is a more sustainable solution. Learning English could alleviate the reading and writing challenges they mentioned above.

3.3.3 “Our English is different”

They left high school thinking that they would get jobs easily. The job-hunting process was very ‘tedious for most hearing university graduates in Zimbabwe’ (Matus et al., 2014). Therefore, it was even worse for a deaf pupil with only a Higher Education Examination Council (HEXCO) certificate of basic introductory courses. However, their disadvantage was not only about

incompetent skills but the inability to write English correctly. When the participants were asked about their job-hunting experiences they stated,

“CV, (laughs), they always ask for a CV and when I give them CV they laugh at my English.”

“I had to ask my sister-in-law to write a CV for me because my English is not good. Even when I want my boss to increase my salary, I tell my sister-in-law on WhatsApp and she writes good English and I copy and give my boss.”

“Someone writes my CV for me and when you go to drop it off the person at the office will want to talk to you and so you have to write down because they do not know sign language. They write on paper to ask you something and when you respond they laugh at my English. I leave immediately.”

“English. (laughs) English, they cannot understand what I write on paper when they ask me a question. They do not want to understand.”

The deaf people’s inability to read and write English was explained by Silvestri (2016: 1) who said, ‘deaf people still use sign language to communicate which affects their language development. “This is because reading alphabetic text requires recognizing the meaning of words coded with the alphabet of a spoken language and deaf people do not have the same access to the spoken languages that inspire alphabetic text’

The deaf people’s capacity to code language is different from hearing people. This difference is not acknowledged in Zimbabwe and it has affected the deaf people’s development as their capabilities are greatly rendered ineffective because of ‘poor communication due to their inability to read and write proper English’ (Luckner and Handley, 2008). With no ‘good communication’ at any work place it will be difficult to work and the deaf people found themselves in a dilemma because of their mode of communication. It should not be an issue if sign language was accommodated or if the root cause that is the flawed education system, would work around enabling the deaf people’s means of ‘communication’ (Luckner and Handley, 2008).

However, other countries like South Africa have since found ways around this incapability through the ‘Red Star training method’. It “is a process which is used by teachers for an increased

awareness and a better understanding of a reading and written language via sign language. Teachers/educators from Deaf Schools throughout Africa are receiving this training to empower the Deaf learners at their schools” (DeafNet, 2019).

One teacher from King George went to Cape Town to be taught how to employ the red star technique.

“I went to Cape Town for six weeks to learn how it works and I was really impressed by the program and could not wait to come and start making use of it here at King George. This is the second year we have been using the program because we had to start with grade ones and the progress is very good. Their ability to learn and read English correctly will be different from those in higher grades. Those are already in higher grades unfortunately we cannot teach them.”

Unfortunately for those that did not get the opportunity to learn through this program including the participants, they still found themselves incapable. However, there is hope for the next generation. Another teacher alluded to this by saying:

“English is a problem for the deaf students to excel, yes their sign language is in English but the sign language and written or spoken English are different.”

The teachers acknowledged that written English for the deaf is a problem, concurring with Kyle and Cain (2015); Maina et al., (2014); Luckner and Handley (2008) and Silvestri (2016). Reading and writing ‘proper’ English for deaf people is not an easy task as the following example of the way they write English compared to how they sign show:

1. *“I have a brain work hard different make all thing”*

Which in sign language is translated to: ‘just because I am different does not mean my brain does not work, I work hard and can make anything’.

2. *“Wait for money at salon but nothing busy”*

Which translates to, ‘I spend the whole day at the salon so I can get clients and get money but sometimes it is not busy’.

3. *“Yes, yes transport morning to time 4 pm arrive stop Mai sell”*

Translating to ‘there is transport in the morning and by 4pm it drops me off by the street vendor at the corner’. “Mai” translates to ‘mother’ who sells at the corner.

4. *“He want work there he say not yet rent”*

Translating to, ‘he is working piece job after normal work shift because we have not paid rent’.

There was a vast difference in their written and signed English. To the participants the meaning was the same but, to the reader the meaning could be different. The meaning could mean something totally different alluding to communication barriers. This adhered to Silvestri’s, (2016) statement above on the coding comprehension aspect that sets sign language and written English apart. Furthermore, Luckner and Handley (2008) listed some of the behaviors amongst the deaf people, “effortful word recognition, limited vocabulary, a lack of understanding of figurative language, weak topic knowledge, a slow reading rate, inadequate understanding of syntax, limited knowledge of different genres, a lack of awareness of text organization, a limited repertoire of comprehension strategies, failure to monitor comprehension, lack of motivation and avoidance of reading as much as possible”.

Reading and writing should not be a problem if the hearing people would also learn sign language and be able to converse using a means that the Deaf can understand. The Deaf cannot be economically excluded because they are incapable of writing English the way hearing people can. This also could affect their working conditions, hindering their human development process.

3.3.4 Terminology according to whom?

Politically correct versus individual perception as far as terminology was a concern that arose from the research. The Deaf participants failed to understand why the term ‘Deaf’ is politically wrong. They found the new term namely, ‘speech and hearing impaired’ to be equally demeaning. This was mostly inherent amongst the older participants. The researcher learnt this as well. The younger ones felt like the term was imposed on them and they asked who it was meant to please.

“Who is supposed to feel better by the use of the term ‘speech and hearing impaired’? I am Deaf.”

“I prefer the term Deaf because it is what it is. ‘Speech and hearing impaired’ is too fancy.”

“Who came up with that term, was it out of pity?” (to which the researcher was speechless)

“When I am signing to let the other hearing, person know that I am Deaf, I simply murmur “I am Deaf”, who when you were interviewing have you seen say “I am hearing impaired, who?”

The latter question by the participant was also surely observed throughout the research. All of the participants when introducing themselves would murmur in some cases a little clearer and in some cases not so clear that ‘*I am Deaf*’ they never would say ‘*I am hearing-impaired*’. The researcher also noted that the teachers would refer to the deaf students as ‘*maDeaf*’ a Shona colloquial version of ‘they are deaf’. This was despite the clear labelling on the classroom doors which read ‘H. I’ referring to ‘hearing impaired’. The term ‘hearing impaired’ is used at the school where the research was conducted and in Zimbabwe it is meant to be a politically correct term (Musengi, 2014). However, as the word ‘hearing impaired’ was said to be derogative by the participants.

The Canadian Association with the Blind (2019) defined the differences. Although the association gives a Canadian pretext, the same applies in the case of Zimbabwe where there is not much holistic research done on defining the differences hence one of the purposes of this research. The differences are,

deaf: A medical/audiological term referring to those people who have little or no functional hearing. May also be used as a collective noun (“the deaf”) to refer to people who are medically deaf but who do not necessarily identify with the Deaf community.

Deaf (with capital D): A sociological term referring to those individuals who are medically deaf or hard of hearing who identify with and participate in the culture, society, and language of Deaf people, which is based on Sign language. Their preferred mode of communication is Sign.

Hard of hearing: A person whose hearing loss ranges from mild to profound and whose usual means of communication is speech. It is both a medical and a sociological term.

Hearing impaired: This term is not acceptable in referring to people with a hearing loss. It should never be used in referring to Deaf people. “Hearing impaired” is a medical

condition; it is not a collective noun for people who have varying degrees of hearing loss. It fails to recognize the differences between the Deaf and the hard of hearing communities.

The participants were not misled in calling themselves Deaf. It was however observed that the participants may have not been aware of the meanings of all the terms. This reinforces the idea of them being disempowered because they know which term best suits them but are told otherwise. The question would be, who was and is supposed to clarify the term?

From these findings it can be argued that the Deaf were living on an imposed sense of disempowerment forced on them by the relevant stakeholders that decided to change the terminology. Within any sense of disempowerment there are always “the ‘empowerers’ and the ‘wanters’ of empowerment, and the ‘wanters’ action depends on the action of the “empowerers” (Lorion and McMillan, 2008). This sense of disempowerment could affect their social development. Also, the effectiveness in change of terminology could be said to not be relatively working in Zimbabwe.

3.4 Assessment

Examinations are how the students are assessed to see if they have grasped the content of what they have been taught (Cresswell, 2000). They are also a way to make sure that one proceeds from one academic level to another.

3.4.1 Inappropriate examination methods

As established above, the deaf individual’s English is different from the hearing and yet they are expected to be examined the same way a hearing pupil is. The participants expressed how they would struggle in an examination setting.

“It would take a lot of time just trying to understand what the question really expects of me.”

“I always know that my English is not going to be as per their standard and in my head, I will be like I am going to get this wrong because of my poor English but I know the answer.”

“I will know the answer but just know that how I write will make get it wrong.”

“I resented the ZIMSEC written papers because they know I cannot write how they want me to. It really breaks my heart. Why cannot I be examined in sign language, the blind would get Braille why not us?”

“Fail fail fail all the time because the English is different.” (Laughs)

The participants recall getting into exams defeated already because they knew they would not pass because of the English. In Zimbabwe, a pupil writes grade seven exams at primary level then proceeds to high school level where they write Ordinary level exams at form four and if they pass, they proceed to write Advanced level at form six.

The national examination board ZIMSEC sets the exam papers but it does not consider the fact that the ‘Deaf have English phonology difficulties’ (Luckner and Handley 2008: 31-32). Nevertheless, the deaf are expected to write the same exams a hearing person writes. The deaf people then fail the exams because they cannot comprehend the questions (Maina et al., 2014). They also fail because their writing technique will not be as per ZIMSEC standard, standards which did not take into consideration the deaf people’s inability to read and write English properly. Cresswell (2000) in a study on the role of public examinations being used to define and monitor education standards argues that ‘setting of standards is not approached holistically’. The setting of standards did not take into consideration students with learning disabilities, whether they were slow or maybe deaf. In this case, setting education standards in Zimbabwe was not given a holistic approach as it failed to put into consideration deaf people’s unique learning abilities.

In South Africa, DeafSa at the parliament Basic Education Committee argued that, “education for deaf learners in South Africa had not been designed specifically to meet the educational, linguistic, cultural, social and cognitive needs of the individual student” (South Africa Parliament Basic Education Committee, 2008). The same is true in Zimbabwe. Poor educational design could result in poor pass rates; therefore, they cannot enhance their level of education from Ordinary level to Advanced level then to university. The Zimbabwean universities only take pupils that have passed their Advanced level. The deaf student could not go beyond Ordinary level and so they don’t get to go to university resulting in a situation which they will ‘not be in education, employment and training’ of any sort (Kraak, 2012: 1).

Education as a capability approach indicator was not fully explored leaving the deaf with less chances of human development (Ataguba et al., 2013). The participants were not examined as per their unique ability and the situation is still prevailing in Zimbabwe. Therefore, expecting them to keep sitting for exams that do not take into consideration their uniqueness results in them looking like they are incapable, when the tools used to measure their ability are not considerably objective, but rather subjectively oppressive.

4. Social exclusion

Social exclusion was defined by Fischer (2011: 3) as “structural, institutional or agentive processes of repulsion or obstruction” which could suggest that social exclusion could be viewed as a ‘situation and or a process’ where various singular or group factors renders a person left out. People can be left out by “voluntary individual choices, patterns of interests or a contractual relationship between actors or ‘distortions’ to the system, such as discrimination, market failures and unenforced rights” Bhalla & Laperye (1997: 415). Whether a person was left out by choice or factors beyond their control, they were still excluded. Social exclusion occurs when citizens suffer from disadvantage and are unable to secure these social rights” Bhalla and Laperye (1997: 415) and Ataguba et al., (2013) added six more ‘occupational institutions’ and termed them capability indicators.

Sen’s (2000: 4-5) writing on social exclusion, stressed on the importance of ‘valuing not being excluded from social relations because being excluded from social relations can lead to other deprivations as well, thereby further limiting our living opportunities’. The deaf participants found themselves left out in the public services sector namely the hospitals where they experienced exclusion at the hands of health care providers. It is also important to note that the “process of exclusion is not an obvious one; it is something which can be hidden and may occur without people noticing” (Ward, 2009: 242).

4.1. Poor Public service

The participants complained mostly about the service they got at the hospitals and clinics. Participants despite being deaf, are human and have the right to health care. The services however at the health care facilities were not user friendly. They related some of their experiences.

“The nurses passed me on from one to another because they did not know sign language. But when it was happening, I was getting worried because I thought I was really sick only to realise it was because they were avoiding a deaf patient.”

“I video call with my sister via WhatsApp and I explain to her and she writes it as a message and I show the nurse at the hospital, if they have more questions I WhatsApp call my sister. She lives in a different city from me.”

“I take my sister with me when I am going to the hospital; she knows sign language, so she explains my pain to the nurse or doctor and translates for the doctor.”

“I value my privacy so I write how I will be feeling on a piece of paper. (Laughs) with my broken English they will have to understand.”

Misunderstandings in the hospitals was also noted in the UK, “when sign language users finally get to see their doctor, they are forced to communicate in ways that cause confusion, misunderstandings, missed diagnosis and poor treatment. Eight in ten deaf people want to use sign language, yet only 3 in 10 are given the chance” (SignHealth, 2014). This was believed to have had led to a lot of wrong diagnosis and could have been fatal (SignHealth, 2014).

The United Nations declaration of human rights stated that ‘everyone has a right to health care (United Nations Development Programme, 1994). The deaf however had difficulties accessing this right because the service providers were not well equipped to accommodate them. BID, a charity organisation in the UK for deaf awareness, amongst other deaf related matters, noted that, “unfortunately, the majority of health professionals do not have the necessary communication skills or knowledge of deaf awareness to meet the needs of deaf patients. This often results in deaf patients feeling excluded from decisions about their medical care” (BID Services, n.d: 4). This spoke to disempowerment as the deaf people could not exercise level five of empowerment as given by Longwe (1995). They had their power taken from them even in matters that concerned their personal health care. This could mean their human development was and hindered because one of the capability approach indicators, which is ‘health care’, was not be provided for them to suit their unique needs which is using sign language as a communication tool.

According to Goss (2003: 1), “deaf communicators experience a lot of frustration with hearing persons when they are forced into exchanging notes”. The writing of notes is explained by Goss as being ‘slow and not interactive’. Seeing the participants communicate amongst themselves the sign language was fast, and the researcher observed that they were able to express themselves fully. It has been established in this paper that they are not good at writing in English and therefore in a situation where they must express themselves through writing whatever they will be trying to communicate loses its authenticity because it will not be expressed in its truest form. The ‘transparency guarantee’ that Sen (1999) stated become difficult to achieve as there would be a level of distortion when communicating is done through difficult means of expression.

4.2 Societal prejudice

Prejudice can be defined as, “as a negative attitude toward a particular social group and its individual members” (Cohrs and Duckitt, 2012: 1). Another scholar argued that it is not only negative but could be positive too (Brown, 2010). Unfortunately for the deaf participants they experienced negative attitude.

4.2.1 Stigma

Sen (2000: 5) emphasized the importance of being included in social relations to alleviate other factors of deprivation. The participants felt that they were excluded by the society because they were deaf.

“I went to a salon to look for a job with my certificates and my beautiful portfolio with beautiful work, but they said no job because I am deaf.”

“They were recruiting cooks to join the air force you know have permanent jobs, with pension and good benefits, but I could not join because I am deaf and yet there are people who came to work here before me who have permanent jobs in the air force now.”

“They were retrenching at the bag making factory where I was working, and they started with me but their others who joined before me. My supervisor told me to my face it is because I am deaf.”

“I got an offer to study plumbing at this small college in town, it was mostly practical for me not much theory. Then they said we should go for attachment and I came to this school but when I finished attachment I went back, and they said they will call me. I still do not

understand what happened. I came back to King George and they offered me a job, but nothing came out of the plumbing course not even a certificate. At the school they would always say, “haatauri” meaning “he doesn’t speak” maybe that’s the reason no one took me seriously.”

“They exclude us in family discussions because I am not educated, and they think do not have anything with sense to say.”

Sen also elaborated on “the difficulty experienced by deprived people in taking part in the life of the community” (2000: 5). The participants in these cases were the ‘deprived people’ because they were left out of development opportunities because they are deaf. They missed out on job opportunities, participating in important family decisions because they are deaf. “It is also important to understand social exclusion as a relational process; the marginalisation experienced by some is to be found in relationships in which their experience is either hidden or devalued” (Ward, 2009: 243).

The deaf people’s services were undermined and devalued for that one reason, being deaf. The community fails to explain the reasons for this marginalization because it is a ‘society norm’ and although the society may not see it as exclusion, it is exclusion (Sibley, 1995). Such ‘society norms’ were carried on from generations to generations with no clear explanation and at the expense of the ‘deprived people’ in this case the deaf people.

They might have comprehension challenges as established above but to be excluded when you have mastered the skill is social exclusion. The participants’ stories shared on their experiences of social exclusion is what Sen gave an example of saying, “being excluded from the opportunity to be employed or to receive credit may lead to economic impoverishment that may, in turn, lead to other deprivations such as undernourishment or homelessness” (Sen, 2000: 5). The participants were being excluded because they are deaf. They missed out on opportunities which means further deprivations leading to a further deteriorated state of human development.

4.3 Lack of consultation

Longwe’s (1995) last two stages of empowerment are, (1) the participation and mobilisation ‘degree’ meaning enabling of the equal decision-making process, and (2) the control ‘degree’ where individuals can make decisions, and these are fully recognised. These stages required

consultation of the people and without the consultation it could be said that there was no empowerment and their development would be biased and human rights forfeited.

4.3.1 Exclusion from decision making

The participants were not consulted when the examinations were changed from ZIMSEC to HEXCO. This could be noted as disempowerment and being left out of decision making which Longwe (1995) advocated for as a level of empowerment. The researcher spoke to some of the teachers, who acknowledged that the change from writing ZIMSEC exams to writing HEXCO exams was not a decision solely made based on the pass rate.

“We saw that the ZIMSEC pass rate were really low and decided to introduce the HEXCO examinations which we thought would help them. See here we teach them level one of the HEXCO courses and when they go to poly technical college, they continue.... we had an agreement with the chancellor who was at the Bulawayo polytechnic college to enroll our students there, but that’s chancellor left, and the agreement fell through.”

The examination section above has explained why the participants failed their ZIMSEC exams. The school, instead of looking at the underlying problem to handle the poor pass rate, handled it at the surface level. This was an incremental approach to development planning only sought to ‘adjust existing practices in accordance to political necessity and expediency’ (York, 1982: 16). It did not seek to comprehensively understand the root cause of the problem for a sustainable solution (York 1982). Similarly, in South Africa, “schools for the deaf often discouraged deaf learners from being part of a dynamic academic environment, because they believed that students would achieve sub-standard results” (DeafSa, 2018).

It can be argued that they could have thought that to be a better solution for the deaf students. However, it alluded to the lack of consultation of the people that were supposed to benefit from this ‘development’. This form of development was not people centered as there was no ‘public participation’, ‘social learning’ was further crippled. There was no ‘empowerment’ as the decision were not made by the deaf community and ‘sustainability’ was definitely not considered because in the long run the deaf people will always lag behind the hearing as far as education and employment is concerned and ultimately human development too (Davids, 2012).

Development should be “development about people and for people” and in this case it was not so (Davids, 2012: 23). Without consultation on issues that affect the deaf people their human development is affected. Their functioning is not in their control but controlled by hearing people who took incremental approaches to planning the deaf people’s means to be able to socially develop, making it hard for the deaf to be socially developed.

The deaf people in Zimbabwe have not been able to live the life they want to live. They had their freedoms stripped away from them by the hearing who make decisions for them without consulting them. They have been expected to live and thrive financially based on these imposed factors like not being taught Zimsec subjects. These Zimsec subjects that are the foundation of a one getting a degree and being financially affluent when they get a job. Indeed, education is not the only key to being financially developed there are other legal ways. However, the deaf deserve to be given the same opportunities at taking the education route to be financially developed. It should be their choice which route they take.

They spent equal time at school with hearing students but the content they are being taught is practice based setting them up for informal employment and a livelihood of so many insufficiencies. These insufficiencies include poor living conditions, no insurance and no medical aid. While the hearing are taking strides towards individual social development, the deaf are left in limbo because of ideologies, cultures, structures and institutions that fail to empower them as they are.

They were not given same opportunities that were awarded to the hearing because they are deaf. Not much research has been done to get to the underlying problem of their alleged inability. The main problem being English reading and writing. English comprehension was a crucial aspect for the deaf that need to be alleviated to ensure social inclusion and empowerment. Their level of empowerment was still at stage three and yet their counterparts have since reached stage five as per Longwe’s five stages of empowerment.

Another crucial point was the lack of resources that are vital in equipping any child in school. Sign language is their communication tool and yet most of their teachers could not sign. This already set them steps back in their learning process. Their learning process was further made hard because they were expected to be examined in ways that a hearing person is examined. The examination process failed to take into consideration that the deaf have poor English phonology and they cannot

read and write English the same way hearing people do. Therefore, they failed the examinations not because they do not know the content.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the Deaf people's perception of self, how they have embraced their being deaf and how they have navigated the quality of employment they have been getting since leaving school. A sense of disempowerment prevailed throughout the findings. The chapter explored their aspirations and expectations they had when they were growing up and the reality that hit them when they became of age. The reality is the fact that they are Deaf therefore they are treated differently. As a result, so many opportunities like the right to learning and writing ZIMSEC examinations were taken away from them. Their basic education was poor and it did not prepare them for competing on the formal job market. There were not many specialized teachers to teach in sign language. The skills given to them were only good enough for informal employment which provides no medical or insurance benefits. The reality that the hearing might not be willing to put in the work and meet them half way as far as language barrier is concerned, they are the ones who must struggle with lip reading. The reality that navigating work spaces, public service spaces like the hospital is difficult because of the language barrier. Finally the reality that deaf persons in Zimbabwe overall consistently experience conditions that undermine their human and social functioning. This subjects them to an oppressive environment that lead to their continuous disempowerment.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Conclusions and recommendations

This dissertation reported on a qualitative research study on the employment prospects of Deaf persons in Zimbabwe. Participants were purposefully selected and some through snowballing sampling. They lived in Gweru and Bulawayo and were between the ages of 24 to 36. Most of them had repeated high school. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews in which an interpreter's voice was recorded during the interviews to convey the responses of the participants.

The participants had a rude awakening about what it entails to be deaf when they were small children playing with other hearing kids. There was no emotional support upon this realisation, and they had to figure out life as a deaf person themselves until they went to school where they interacted with other deaf children. Most deaf people, if not all, had embraced their deafness and are proud of who they are. They were not pleased with the terminology that the hearing thought was politically correct when referring to them, to them they are deaf and that is it. The change in terminology they believed was made for them by the hearing without consulting them.

They acknowledged that they can do most things hearing people can. They were not happy with the limitations imposed on them. For the most part they grew up conditioned to think that being deaf meant that they could not do a lot of things and yet they could and can. It can be argued that it was society's way of dealing with what they did not understand. This means they did not know how to deal with having deaf people hence the exclusion and the crippling limitations socially and on their education. The limitations affected their employment prospects and their financial and social status. The societal prejudice follows them at public services like the hospitals where they are ignored, treated with no respect and stigmatized. Despite the limitations, their aspirations were still vibrant. They were still hopeful that with an enabling environment they will eventually be able to realise their dreams.

The deaf community has faced immense discrimination in a country that does not acknowledge their deafness and the uniqueness of their capabilities. From the communities they grew up in they were and are stereotyped as being unable to play games that other children play because they cannot hear. True, there are other games that require hearing but they find themselves entirely shut out because of who they are. They are stereotyped as being unable to communicate with other people, when it is not a matter of being unable to but a matter of an ignorant environment. An

environment that only recognizes their inability to speak and hear but fails to learn the alternative mode of communication they can use which is sign language.

The same stereotype is taken to the school setting where their future capabilities are squashed and buried and replaced with imposed skills based on their inability to talk and hear. There was a shift from ZIMSEC subjects to HEXCO subjects, a decision that was made with no consultation of the deaf students. The reason for this replacement being the fact that they fail the ZIMSEC national exams, a fact that can be explained as being caused by their low comprehension levels (Kyle and Cain, 2015).

As a result of the supposedly low comprehension skills, ('supposedly' because all the deaf individuals cannot be put in one bracket), they are excluded from some of the high school subjects especially science, economics and literature subjects. This is so because the subjects are deemed too hard for them to comprehend. However, knowing this should be empowering and used to inform ways that help to educate them despite low comprehension. The practical based skills imposed on them as an alternative did not do them any justice as no proper thorough research was done to try to get to the bottom of the reason why they fail exams. Decisions on their lives as far as education is concerned were made based on quantitative analysis of the final examinations outcome and not empirical analysis.

An empirical analysis would have discovered that yes there have low comprehension levels and it would have also been discovered that the teachers cannot teach in sign language. The participants went through their basic education with teachers that could not explain to them in a language they can engage in. The assumption that all deaf individuals can lip read is false (BID Services, n.d.) It is based on this assumption that most of the participants were expected to learn in class and pass their examinations which is wrong and disempowering. Their education capabilities were based on assumptions, assumptions that compromised their right to education because a partial right is what they have been getting. It also cost them having formal careers, being business owners, accessing private health care, better living conditions, insurance and stable food security.

All these could seem impossible considering the difficult economic situation Zimbabwe is in right now, but the fact remains that they have been denied the opportunity to explore what they wanted to be. Employment prospects are greatly influenced by education and for the deaf individuals these prospects are only informal as the formal ones have been made impossible by situations beyond

their control (DeafSA 2018: 26). Situations that need to change so that they get a chance at a good education which might lead to getting a good chance at formal employment as is their desire.

All of the participants were informally employed because the skills they were taught were entry level skills therefore they cannot compete with someone who has a diploma or later on a degree in the field. For example, bookkeeping level one as compared to a University degreed accountant. At their places of work, they were being oppressed. They found themselves at disadvantaged positions because they could not hear the boss's car pulling up outside and so they could not run away like other hearing workers. Therefore, they are left to do the work alone after hours for overtime they do not get paid for.

On most parts they work under horrible conditions because they know work is hard to come by for them and so they stay and endure just so they can earn a living. They were all not satisfied with their jobs. The participants were not familiar with technology and they found job searching on the internet difficult. This also meant they could not advertise their work online in a world where the internet is the fastest means of disseminating information.

The economic crisis in Zimbabwe keeps deteriorating and many educated Zimbabweans found themselves formally unemployed and making ends meet informally. Informal employment which the deaf individuals were dependent on became flooded making earning a basic livelihood even harder. The deaf individuals were and are excluded on the formal job market because they are not academically equipped to compete on it. For years they were the ones selling airtime on the street corners, the go to mechanics, the upholsterer, the affordable dressmakers and hairdressers something that they were skilled to do. Actually, the only thing they were taught to do and know how to do.

Now they have had to compete with unemployed graduates who learnt the skills as a hobby, a skill a deaf person had to go to school to learn. A hearing graduate who can easily charm a customer in all respective fields mentioned above simply because they can talk to the customer and the deaf cannot. The hearing customers which are obviously the majority population in Zimbabwe are now faced with options. Therefore, instead of enduring sign language which they struggle to speak they go for the new hearing service providers. Business has become slow for them within the market that they were forced to be comfortable in and they find their food security compromised. There now has been major competition for informal means to earn money.

Recommendations

Teachers need to learn sign language at their teaching colleges, however this is a long-term solution. For those that are already at the deaf schools but cannot teach sign language they should have a crash course in sign language. Having interpreters at the schools would also be viable; it would be an expensive solution but a more efficient one because they will help alleviate the problem now. There should be community outreaches where basic sign language is taught at all communities in Zimbabwe. A more compulsory and effective measure for a long-term solution would be to teach sign language at all primary schools and secondary schools in Zimbabwe. The hearing community needs to meet the deaf community half way. Also, from a social development perspective, there will be massive job creation because there will be a need for sign language teachers at schools. It will be like having a French teacher at a school.

The examination system must change as well. The examination council in Zimbabwe will have to adopt the South African examination system which they piloted in 2018 for examining sign language as a subject. The examination process goes as follows, “learners work in closed off booths where they watch questions in sign language then video record themselves signing the answer” (Nowicki, 2019). This same method can be used to examine all the other subjects as the deaf people will be able to fully comprehend what the question requires them to do. Written English is not easy for them to comprehend, as the participants said, and this would be a tool that will empower them to be socially developed as far as education is concerned.

South Africa’s Umalusi in 2018 piloted a program that saw Deaf matric pupils being examined using sign language (Ditaunyane, 2018: 1). Umalusi is a council that “sets and monitors standards for general and further education and training in South Africa” (Umalusi, n.d). This research could inform Zimbabwe to follow suit as it might be the bridge that covers the gap between education and the poor employment prospects of Deaf individuals.

There is need for more research to be done to clarify terminology. Terminology needs to be influenced by the deaf people and not the hearing abled.

To sum up, the researcher recommended that,

- teachers need to learn sign language,
- there should be school text books in sign language

- there should be interpreters at the schools of all academic levels,
- general public should learn sign language,
- there should be video examinations and
- more research to be done to clarify terminology

Conclusion

Deaf people despite having a strong sense of self, they are still socially excluded and live under imposed limitations that greatly disempower them. This disempowerment greatly affects their human rights and capabilities to reach their full potential. The Ministry of Education in Zimbabwe has done nothing in trying to understand why the pass rate at deaf schools was and is low.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION & CONSENT FORM

Date:

Name of Researcher: Diana Rumbidzai Maposa

Student number: MPSDIA001

This research forms part of the qualification for a (Masters in Social Sciences specialising in Social Development) degree in the Department of Social Development at the University of Cape Town

Title of Study:

An exploratory study of the employment prospects of hearing and speech impaired individuals in Zimbabwe.

Objectives of the Study:

- To explore the quality of jobs the S & HI have and how it affects their livelihood
- To explore what informs their decisions when looking for jobs
- To examine if being S & H I affect their opportunities on the labor market.
- To explore the link between the S & HI education and employment opportunities
- To explore if education and employment informs their perception of self

Please read the following and sign if you agree to participate in this study.

Research Procedures: I understand that I will be participating in an interview process to explore *(the education system which is limited in meeting the needs of S & HI. This research will examine*

the educational experience and consequent employment opportunities of the S&HI). The interview will last approximately one hour and will be recorded with your permission using a digital recorder or by taking notes. The recording will be transcribed and the notes, the recorded information and the transcripts will be kept in a secure place. Once the research has been completed, this material will be only be used for academic purposes and the transcripts and recordings will be destroyed.

Risks and Harm: There are no foreseen risks or harm in participating in this research. However, in the event of any emotional distress by a participant, the researcher will make a referral for appropriate assistance.

Benefits/Incentives: I understand that this research will not benefit me directly and that I will not be paid for agreeing to do this interview. However, through my participation, the information gathered will provide important information in *understanding of the requirements needed to be put in place in the education and employment systems for the benefit of the S & HI.*

Participant's Rights: I understand that I am free to withdraw from participating in this study at any time, without giving any reason and that there are no consequences should I decide not to participate at any stage.

Confidentiality: I understand that the interview process will be kept strictly confidential and that information will be available to the researcher and the supervisor. Extracts from the interviews will be included in the final research report without anyone being able to link my quotes to my identity. The final report will be examined by an external examiner and the findings will be made available to participating agencies. Under no circumstances will my name be revealed in the report or any other publications related to this research.

I understand that if at any time I would like any additional information about this research, I can contact my research supervisor, Dr.Somaya Abdullah telephonically at 0027 21 650-4219 or by email at somaya.abdullah@uct.ac.za

I confirm that I have read this consent form or researcher has read it to me and that the study has been explained to me. I voluntarily participate in this study

Signature of Participant

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Signature of Researcher

Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

Appendix 2: Letter of permission from King George VI

Mar 19, 2019,
8:26 AM

Inez Hussey <ihussey@kgvi.org>

to sam, Precious, me

Hi Diana,

I have passed your message on to our project officers who will be able to identify some school leavers for you. Either Samantha or Precious will be in touch and you can continue emailing them.

Best,

I Hussey

From: Diana Maposa [mailto:deerue17@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, 18 March 2019 14:51

To: ihussey@kgvi.org

Subject: Re: Research interests.

Appendix 3: Interview Questions

Interview questions

Biography data

Sex;

Male	
Female	

Age;

Under 18	
18-30	
31-50	
Over 50	

Highest level of education?

Primary school	
Secondary or high school	
College/ Technicon	
University degree or Diploma	
No formal education	

- **To explore the quality of jobs the S & HI have and how it affects their livelihood**

What kind of jobs do they do and was it by choice?

Are they content with the jobs they currently have?

What they earn is it enough to sustain a basic standard of living?

Things like;

Food to eat

House to live in? (Whether they own it or pay rent)

Running water?

Flushing toilet?

Electricity?

Television?

Newspaper?

Mode of transport?

Access to a phone (landline and cellphone?)

Access to a clinic? (public or private)

Are they able to afford their children's school fees?

Do they participate in refreshing activities after work?

- **To explore what informs their decisions when looking for jobs**

Do they look for a job based on the education qualifications?

Do they look for a job based on choice or need?

Do they consider/wonder how the hearing workmates will relate to them?

Do they wonder if the hearing workmates know sign language or they worry about being able to read lips?

Do they consider the salary they get? Is their salary enough to for their daily and monthly needs?

- **To examine if being S & H I affect their opportunities on the labor market.**

How do they learn of job opportunities and or vacancies?

Who helps with the application process since their written English is not up to the required standard?

What challenges do they face during the application process?

How have the challenges informed their choice of work now?

Have their ever gone through an interview process and how was it conducted?

- **To explore the link between the S & HI education and employment opportunities**

Based on the highest level of education given, why did they end at that level of education?

What subjects did they learn and were they satisfied with the subjects and what other subjects did they wish they could have learnt?

Were they content with the resources?

Was the teacher's knowledge in sign language good?

What resources do they think would have helped, that they did not have

The subjects they learnt do they think made them ready for employment?

If given the opportunity would they go back to school and learn the subjects they wished they could have learnt.

- **To explore if education and employment informs their perception of self**

Do they feel less human because of the subjects they are taught and the kind of jobs they have?

Do they wish to further their studies so as to feel at par with their hearing counterparts?

How do they feel if their dream jobs are not fulfilled?

Who do they hold responsible for a dream job not fulfilled?

What is the next plan for them career wise and why?

Appendix 4: Editor's letter

29/09/2020

To whom it may concern

Manuscript by Diana R. Maposa (MPSDIA001) – An exploratory study of the employment prospects of Hearing and Speech Impaired individuals in Zimbabwe.

I, the undersigned do hereby confirm that I was a tutor for post-graduate law students at the Writing Centre of the University of Cape Town for the period August 2015 to January 2018. Relying mostly on this experience, I have reviewed the above to check for grammatical and spelling errors and I provided both oral and written feedback to the author. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on justicemavedzenge@gmail.com

Kind regards,

Dr. Justice A. Mavedzenge